

Dr. Martin Luther's

Complete Writings,

published by

Dr. Joh. Georg Walch.

Fifth volume.

Interpretation of the Old Testament.

(Continued.)

New revised stereotype edition.

ST. LOUIS, MO.
CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE.
1896.

Dr. Martin Luther's Interpretation of the Old Testament.

(Continued.)

Interpretations of the Psalms (continued), Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

Newly published on behalf of the Ministry of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod
of Missouri, Ohio and other States.

ST. LOUIS, MO.
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Foreword.

While the previous volume contained the interpretations Luther gave on groups of psalms, this volume brings his explanations on individual psalms. The only exception to this is the first scripture, the interpretation of the four psalms of consolation to Queen Mary in Hungary, which Walch has included in this volume to give it the appropriate strength. Also found here is the interpretation of Ecclesiastes to Solomon and the brief interpretation of the Song of Songs. In this volume, too, we have made every effort to produce a good text.

We have newly translated all the writings that were originally written in Latin, namely the interpretations of the 2nd, 45th, 51st and 90th Psalms, the interpretation of Ecclesiastes and the short interpretation of the Song of Songs. We were forced to make such an extensive new translation mainly because of the arbitrariness of the old translators. Georg Major, whom we already got to know as a translator in the previous volume in the songs in the higher choir, shows

Here, in the translation of the 45th and 51st Psalms, the same procedure as there. Right at the beginning of the 45th Psalm, Luther's remarks about his state of health, which prevented him from interpreting the Psalter in order, or an entire biblical book, are missing. After that, in both the 45th and 51st Psalms, many other essential pieces are omitted, namely all linguistic explanations. There are two different old translations of the interpretation of the 90th Psalm, about which we have already reported in the first note Col. 732. One of them, by Johann Spangenberg, has hardly any equal. It is quite interesting to read, also Christian and edifying throughout, but only loosely follows what is offered in the Latin text. The other, which is nameless, is very faithful, but it contains in expression many harshnesses offensive to our time; e.g., in the old edition of Walch, Col. 1136, § 138, *mutabilis* == is subject to change, given by: "whether they will probably be transformed"; *obnoxiae morti* ==.

subject to death, by: "subject to death"; peccatis obruti -- burdened with sins, by: "heaped with sins"; *ibid.* § 137: *insensati* -- insensible [Gal. 3, 1.], by: "insensible." Furthermore, we find expressions such as: "to divide the Scriptures" instead of: to divide the Scriptures rightly 2c. - The Ecclesiastes of Solomon was translated by D. Justus Jonas. Luther's preface, which takes up four octavo pages in the Latin Erlangen edition, comprises three full folio pages in compressed print in the German Wittenberg edition according to Jonas' translation. An almost equally great prolixity is evident in the translation of the entire Scripture. - Greiff's translation of the Song of Songs is better than the one of the *operationes in psalmos* discussed in the preface to the previous volume, but it seemed to us that it should be replaced by a new one.

We have omitted the writing that is printed in Walch's old edition Vol. V, Col. 2364 ff. under the title: "Erklärung des Spruchs Pred. Salom. 7, 21," because it forms part of the Heidelberg Disputation and has already been included in our edition Vol. XVIII, 58-69. This passage is also found in other editions as a special writing of Luther, namely in Latin in the Wittenberg (1550), tom. I, fol. 196 (this evidence is missing Erl. exeg. opp., tom. XXI, p. 251); in the Jena (1579), tom. I, fol. 173; in Löscher's *Reformationsaeten*, vol. II, p. 325 and in the Erlanger,

exeg. opp., tom. XXI, 249; German in the supplement to the Leipzig edition, p. 18.

According to the second edition of the Erlangen edition, we have added No. 35^a, a better relation of the sermon on Ps. 68, 19, about the power of the ascension of Christ, as No. 35^b. The latter is a more prolix and diluted relation of the former. The first comprises fourteen pages in the Erlangen edition, the other twenty; the content in both is exactly the same. - Of the interpretation of the 37th Psalm to the Wittenbergers, we have reproduced text and interpretation according to the Weimar edition, while Walch brings complete only the beginning and end, but the middle in a deficient indication of variants.

Improved according to the Weimar edition, we have No. 19, the German interpretation of the 68th Psalm. Furthermore, No. 24, the first interpretation of the 110th Psalm. This made a twofold revision necessary, because the 9th volume of the Weimar edition, which contains Luther's manuscript of the interpretation of the 109th (110th) Psalm, came to us only after we had already improved Walch's text after the printing of the Weimar edition, Vol. I, p. 687 ff. This second correction according to the manuscript was laborious, but nevertheless interesting and valuable. Here we have had the opportunity to see how justified Luther's repeated complaints are about the spoiled printing of his writings.

ten. In this case (where Spalatin was in charge of the printing in Augsburg), there does not seem to have been even a comparison with the manuscript after the typesetting was completed, because otherwise it would not have been possible that so many omissions and inaccuracies had occurred. Nevertheless, all other editions are based on this Augsburg print. - We have also corrected No. 30, the interpretation of the 119th Psalm, according to the Weimar edition, and have been able to supplement the meager literary-historical notes that Walch gives in the introduction to the fourth volume.

Through the register in Buchwald's "Poach", p. XXVII, we have been able to correct the time given for No. 35^a. We have given other time determinations than the usual ones for No. 10, 13, 20 and 34, which seemed more probable to us.

In order to encourage us to make diligent use of these wonderful writings, we add a short word from Luther.

In the interpretation of the 117th Psalm, Luther gives "cause or instruction to seek and act everywhere in Scripture the main point of our Christian doctrine, namely, that we must become pious, alive, and blessed without all merit, by the grace of God alone, given to us in Christ, and that otherwise no other way, no other path, no other way, no other work may help us to achieve this".

That we may also comply with this, my dear reader, let us pray with Luther in the words with which he concludes this interpretation: "May God, our dear eternal Father, who has so abundantly enlightened us through His dear Son and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, also strengthen us with complete faith through His Holy Spirit, and give us strength to follow such light faithfully and diligently, and to praise and glorify Him together with all the Gentiles, both with teachings and life. To Him be thanksgiving and glory for all His unspeakable grace and gifts forever and ever. Amen."

St. Louis, around Reformation Day 1896.

A. F. Hoppe.

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Dr. Martin Luther's Interpretation of the Old Testament.

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VI. D. Martin Luther's Interpretation on the Psalms.

(Continued.)

9. interpretation of the four psalms of consolation,

namely the 37th 62nd 94th and 109th Psalms, to Queen Mary in Hungary.*)

Anno 1526.

The Most Serene Highborn Women, Mary, Queen of Hispania 2c., Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, my most gracious wives.

Grace and comfort from God our Father and Lord Jesus Christ. Most gracious Madam Queen! I had intended to ascribe these four psalms to King M. by pious people, as a reminder that King M. should keep fresh and cheerful in promoting the holy Word of God in Hungary, because I had the good news 1) that King M. was inclined to the Gospel, and yet by the godless bishops (who in Hungary are powerless to do so), he was not able to do anything about it.

The fact that they have allowed some innocent blood to be spilled, and have vowed abominably against the truth of God, would be greatly prevented and averted.

But now, unfortunately, by God's power and providence, things have turned around in such a way that the Turk has caused this misery and misery, and the noble young blood, King Louis, His Royal Highness's dear spouse, has been defeated, my authority has also had to turn around. If the bishops had let the gospel go, all the world would now be full of cries that such a case had come over Hungary because of the Lutheran heresy. What blasphemy should have been there! To whom

1) In the old editions: "zukamen".

* Queen Mary, daughter of King Philip I of Spain and sister of Emperor Charles V, was the wife of King Louis II of Hungary. She was inclined to the Gospel and had her own court preacher, Johann Henkel, whom Spalatin praises in his *annales reformationis*, p. 140. She resisted the blasphemies against Luther and contributed much to the spread of the Gospel in Hungary. When her husband was killed in the battle of Mohacz against the Turks on August 29, 1526, she had to seek refuge at the court of Vienna. Luther dedicated the interpretation of the four Psalms of Consolation to her. This greatly annoyed the papal authorities and caused Emser to make outbursts against Luther, and King Ferdinand to reproach his sister Maria. Luther had interpreted the 37th Psalm earlier and attributed it to the Wittenbergers in 1521. Here, this interpretation is somewhat shortened, which is why the first adaptation is also included in this volume. This writing was first published in 1526 by Hans Barth in Wittenberg under the title: "Vier tröstliche Psalmen An die Königin zu Hungern ausgelegt durch Martinum Luther Wittenberg. 1. 5. 26." There, in 1527, an edition by Joseph Klug; another by Michel Lotther, a third without indication of the printer; finally an edition by Hans Herrgot. In the collective editions: in the Wittenberg (1553>, vol. III, p. 45b; in the Jena (1556), vol. III, p. 303b; in the Altonburg, vol. III, p. 487; in the Leipzig, vol. V, p. 609 and in the Erlangen, vol. 38, p. 369. The original of the Erlangen is a reprint, which is full of errors, therefore we follow the Jena edition. We also give some deviations from the Erlanger edition only in the beginning. To correct the readings in the 37th Psalm, we have used the first edition (Weim. Ausg., Vol. VIII, p. 205) several times.

they now want to blame, let them watch. God has forbidden it (as I see), so that no cause for such blasphemy would arise.

As in all this, because St. Paul writes to the Romans [Cap. 15, 4.] that the Holy Scriptures are comforting Scriptures, and teach us patience, I have nevertheless continued, and let the same Psalms go forth, to comfort (as much as God comforts us and gives us) E. K. M. in this great sudden calamity and misery, so that the Almighty God may give E. K. M. a home in this time, not out of wrath or disfavor, as we should reasonably hope, but to chasten and tempt, so that E. K. M. may learn to trust in Him alone. K. M. in this time, not out of anger or disfavor, as we should reasonably hope, but to chastise and to try, so that K. M. may learn to trust only in the right Father, who is in heaven, and to take comfort in the right Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, who is also our brother, yes, our flesh and blood, and to rejoice with the right friends and faithful companions, the dear angels, who are around us and take care of us.

For, although it is a bitter, difficult death for her and should be fair to her to become a widow so early and to be deprived of her dear husband, the Scriptures, especially the Psalms, will, on the other hand, give her much good comfort and show her the sweet, loving Father and Son in abundance, in whom the certain and eternal life is hidden. And

Truly, if anyone can see and feel the Father's love for us in the Scriptures, he can easily bear all the misfortunes that may be on earth. Again, he who does not feel the same cannot be truly joyful, even if he sponges in all the world's pleasures and joys. Such a great accident can happen to no man as happened to God the Father Himself, that His dearest child, for all His miracles and good deeds, is finally spit upon, cursed, and put to death on the cross in the most shameful way, even though each man considers his misfortune to be the greatest, and is more to his heart than Christ's cross, even if he had suffered ten crosses. This means that we are not as strong in patience as God is, therefore lesser crosses hurt us more than Christ's cross.

But the Father of mercy and God of all consolation wanted to comfort E. K. M. in His Son, Jesus Christ, through His Holy Spirit, so that she would soon forget this misery, or at least be able to bear it manfully. Amen. At Wittenberg on the first of the winter moon [Nov. 1]. 1526. E. K. M.

willing servant,
Martinus Luther,

The 37th Psalm of David,*)

To comfort those who are impatient that the wicked do evil, and yet so long remain unpunished in great happiness.

V. 1. Do not be angry with the wicked; do not be envious of the wicked.

1. How immediately the prophet takes hold of and strikes the thoughts of the heart in this temptation, and he raises up all the causes of it, saying first: O man! thou art angry, thou also hast cause, as thou thinkest; for they are wicked men, and do iniquity and much evil, and yet it goeth well with them that nature respecteth,

to be the honest cause of anger here 1). But not so, dear child, let grace, and not nature, rule here; break the wrath and be quiet a little while; let them do evil, let them do well; hear me, it shall not hurt thee. So the man says: Yes, when will it then cease? who can hold the length? He answers:

1) Erlanger: da.

*) "Davids" is missing in the Erlanger. - The interpretation of this psalm is missing here in the Wittenberg edition and only several variants of the first and second arrangements are given.

V. 2 For like grass they will soon be cut down, and like the green herb they will wither.

2. This is a fine likeness, terrible to those who gloat and comforting to those who suffer. How finely it lifts us out of our face and sets us before God's face. Before our face the multitude of the gleamers green, blossom, and multiply, and cover the whole world, that they alone may seem something; as the green grass covers and adorns the earth. But in the sight of God, what are they? Hay to be made sheer; and the higher the grass grows, the nearer to it are the scythes and pitchforks: so the higher, farther the wicked green and hovering above, the nearer is their subjection. Why then wilt thou be angry, if their wickedness and happiness be so short a being? So then you say: What shall I do in the meantime? What shall I do until these things come to pass? Listen, great promise:

V. 3. Hope in the Lord, and 1) do good, abide in the land, and nourish yourself in the faith.

Then he takes away all impatient thoughts and puts the heart to rest. As if he should say: Dear child, leave your impatience, and do not curse or wish them evil, they are human and evil thoughts. Put your hope in God; wait and see what he will make of it; you go for yourself; for no one's sake, leave doing good as you have begun, where and to whom you may, and give not evil for evil, but good for evil.

(4) If you think that you would flee and go to another place and be rid of them and get away from them, do not stay in the land, live where you are, do not change your dwelling place or land for their sake, but continue in the faith, do your work and trade as before. If they hinder you or harm you, and give you cause to flee, let go; remain in faith, and do not doubt, God will not let you; do only your own, work and nourish yourself, and let him rule. [Thou shalt not cease from feeding thyself, whether they feed thee or not.

1) "and" is missing in the Erlanger.

hinder you in one piece. God, if you hope, will give it to you in the other place, as He did to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who were also tempted in this way.

V. 4. Take delight in the Lord, who will give you whatever your heart desires.

(5) That is, let it not grieve thee, that God thus suffereth them to prosper; let such his will please thee, and thou shalt not be displeased with the happiness of the wicked; yea, be satisfied thyself in it, as in the very best and divine will. Behold, thou hast this comforting promise: He will give you everything your heart desires. What more do you want? Only see to it that, instead of the vexation that thou art exhausted by them, thou exercise this delight and pleasure in the divine will, and not only shall they do thee no harm, but thy heart shall also be full of peace, and joyfully wait for this promise of God.

V. 5. Command the Lord thy ways, and hope in him; he will do it well.

6 Not that thou shouldest walk idly, but thy ways, works, words, and doings, command God; turn not to them. For it must not be commanded to God that we do nothing; but what we do, whether it be promised, reviled, blasphemed, or hindered by the oppressors, let it not therefore be softened, nor let it cease, but let it always continue, and let them have their way, commanding the thing to God, who will do it well on both sides, which is right.

V. 6. and will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday.

(7) This is the greatest sorrow of the weak-minded, (2) that they should be displeased with the wicked, that their wickedness should seem and be well kept; for they fear that their cause should be destroyed and darkened, because they see the adversaries' rages so high and hovering above. Therefore he comforted them, saying: "Let it be, my dear child, that they may destroy you and your cause with clouds and downpours, and that they may destroy you in the sight of the world and bury you in darkness, so that your cause may soar and shine.

2) Marginal gloss of the Jena: weak believers.

like the sun. If you command God to do your business, if you hope and wait for him, you can be sure that your justice and righteousness will not remain in darkness; it must come forth and be known to everyone as publicly as the bright noon, so that all those who have obscured and darkened you will be put to shame. It is only a matter of waiting, so that you do not hinder God in this by your anger, displeasure and annoyance. For this reason he admonishes you once:

V. 7. keep still unto the LORD, and let him deal with thee. Do not be angry with the man who is well and does according to his own will.

(8) As if he should say: It will grieve thee that thou feelest unhappiness in a right cause, and [it] go well with those in wickedness¹ and will not go as thou wouldst; and yet see that [it] goeth to the unrighteous according to all his will 2) that a proverb has flowed out of this: The greater the mischief, the better the happiness. But be wise, dear child, do not let this move you, keep out of God, your heart's desire will also come, even abundantly. But it is not yet time, the happiness of the shawl must pass, and have its time, until [it] passes. However, you must command God, be satisfied in Him, let His will be done, so that you do not hinder His will in you and in your enemy; as those do who do not cease to rage, for they have brought their thing either through with their head or to ruins.

He uses a fine Hebrew word here: *Sile Domino*³) et formare ei, Be still and make yourself hard. Just as a fruit in the womb is made by God, so in this case you are also conceived in God, and he will make you into a right shape, if you keep still.

V. 8. turn away from anger, and leave off wrath; be not enraged, that thou also mayest do evil.

(10) Behold, how diligently he warns that we 4) not repay evil with evil, neither

1) Erlanger: den.

2) Erlanger: "Wills" and "Wrongs".

3) Domino is missing from the Erlanger.

4) "yes" is missing in the Erlanger.

follow the wicked for the sake of their happiness, as nature is wont to do. And what good is such anger? It does not make things better, indeed, it only leads them deeper into the mud. And even if it turned out for the best, that you were lying on top and growing, what did you gain? You have prevented God, thus losing His grace and favor, and you have become like the evil doers, and will perish like them, as follows:

V. 9: For the wicked will be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord will inherit the land,

(11) It does not help you that you have not begun, or that you are irritated. For it is a bad free judgment: He who does evil, provoked or not provoked, shall be 5) cut off. This is also seen in all the world, in all the stories. But he who waits on God remains, so that the evil-doer perishes beside him; who could only wait so lukewarmly. Evil men are so ripe that even if no one drives them out, they cannot abstain themselves; they wantonly cause misfortune on their necks, which destroys them by and by. 7) For the ripe grass must become hay, and should it wither on 8) itself, on the stem. A wicked man is no one so untrustworthy and corruptible as himself. We see this in the murderers, thieves, tyrants and similar examples.

V. 10. it is yet for a little, so the wicked is not; then shalt thou take heed to his place, and he shall not be there.

12 This explains what is said above [v. 2], that they are like grass that is cut down quickly, so that our impatience may be quenched, which fears that the wicked will remain too long.

(13) But you may say, "Yes, I can see that the unrighteous generally remain long and go to their graves with honor. Answer: This is certainly because the other part has not kept to this psalm, but has handled the matter with anger, rage, and grimness.

5) Erlanger: becomes free.

6) "whether" is missing in the Erlanger.

7) Jenaer: that they... be destroyed.

8) Thus the Jena. Erlanger: from. First editing: in.

and cries, and prevented and spoiled them. Therefore, because there was no one to command his cause to God and to wait for His will, the judgment of the next verse passed over both parts, and all who did evil were destroyed. But if one part had been converted to God, the other part would certainly and quickly have perished alone, as this verse says. Therefore we do not see this Psalm's example in the world. For everyone lets God go through impatience, and dares to protect himself with rights or fencing. In this way, God is prevented from doing the work that this psalm praises Him for.

V. 11. But the wretched shall inherit the land, and delight in great peace.

14 This also confirms what is said above [v. 9], how the righteous remain after the destruction of the wicked. Not that they remain on earth forever, but that their cause comes to an end and peace with honor, even on earth; which peace they have earned with suffering and patience, and inward peace.

V. 12: The wicked oppresses the righteous, and gnashes his teeth at him.

15) But this is said for the comfort of the weaklings 1) who do not want to suffer the ravings of the wicked, and are annoyed that God does not punish them soon, and thus lets them go. I call impium an ungodly person; for it actually means one who does not trust in God nor believe, who lives from himself and his free will, nor in nature; as especially are the gleamers, the scholars and seeming saints, as in our lines are pope, bishops, priests, monks, doctors and the like people, 2) who by nature must rage against the holy gospel; as we see that they also do it viciously. But what does their raging and blustering help? Hear what follows:

V. 13 But the Lord laughs, for he sees that his day is coming.

16) How could we be more comforted that the raging enemies of the

1) Marginal gloss of the Jena: weak believers.

2) Thus the first edition and the Wittenberg; Jena and Erlangen: "Volks".

Do the righteous put forward all their power and wickedness, thinking in all seriousness to tear the righteous (that is, the believer in God) with teeth, and does God despise them so much that He laughs at them, because He sees how shortly they will rage, and their day is not far off? Not that God, like a man, laughs, but that it is ridiculous to look at in truth, that the foolish men are so nearly mad, and undertake great things, which they may not accomplish a hair's breadth. It would be like a ridiculous fool 3) who would take a long spear and a short sword, and would stab the sun from the sky, and would shout at it once, as if he had done an honest stabbing.

V. 14: The wicked draw out the sword, and draw their bow, that they may cut down the wretched and the poor, and slay them that walk uprightly in the way.

17 The "sword" and "bow" here are called the poisonous, evil tongues, so that they may blaspheme, revile, pervert, accuse and desecrate the cause of the righteous, so that the pious may come into hatred, persecution and death by it and be destroyed. Thus says Ps. 57:5: "The tongues of the children of men are weapons and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword"; with it they strike at the righteous, whether they would cut him down and slay him; that is, not only kill him, but according to their will they roil and smear him.

18 He also calls the righteous "the lowly and the poor," because they are despised and lowly before the great and arrogant swearing and blowing of the wicked. But what do they judge? Listen:

V. 15. But their sword will go into their heart, and their bow will break.

19 That is, their evil words must eat them up again and strangle them forever, so that their conscience, pierced with them in death, will be tormented forever. In addition, the bow will break, so that everything is in vain, and they achieve nothing with all their rage, but that they themselves cause such misfortune eternally,

3) "Bock Emser. Marginal gloss of the Jenaer. - Compare Walch. St. Louis edition, vol. XVIII, 1285 ff, 1291 ff.

The poor, wretched people. Therefore, no one should be afraid of their hussing and defilement: it must be that they themselves prepare the bath of hell for them; although nature does not suffer such heavy blasphemous words. But the spirit, judged by this psalm, laughs at them with God, and looks to their end.

V. 16. It is better to have the little of the righteous than the great goods of many wicked.

020 It is also grievous in nature, that the wicked are rich, and of them much and mighty; but the righteous is poor and alone, having also little, and they take from him that which is his, hindering him also from food. Therefore the Holy Spirit comforts his dear child, saying, "Do not be grieved that you have little and they have much; let them be rich and full here; it is better for you to have a little with God's favor, than to have great heaps of goods, not only of one, but of many and of all the wicked with God's disfavor, as they have. Hear also what judgment is made of thy poverty and their riches:

V. 17 For the arm of the wicked is broken, but the LORD contains the righteous.

(21) The "arm" or hand is the attachment of the wicked, that they hold much together, and by this they are great, mighty and strong; just as now the Pope's arm is the kings, princes, bishops, scholars, priests and monks, on whom he relies, and does not respect God. Thus every wicked man has on his side the multitude, the mighty; for wealth and power have never been on the side of the righteous, or even a little.

But what good is it? Only trust in God, everything must be broken; you must not be dismayed by it, nor let yourself be distressed. God will contain you, you will not sink; His arm and His hand are over you, and have firmly grasped you.

V. 18. The Lord knows the days of the righteous, and their inheritance shall remain forever.

23. God knows their days, their occasions; that is, because they believe him freely, and

do not want to know when and how to help them, God takes care of them; and although it seems to the wicked that God has forgotten them, it is not so; God knows well when it is their time to help them. As also Ps. 9:10 [Vulg.]: "God is a helper in due time"; and Ps. 31:16: "My time is in your hands." As if he should say: They are poor and little, those are rich and mighty; but let go, they will still have enough and suffer no need. God knows well when it is time to help and advise them, whom they also trust, without seeking help and counsel of their own.

(24) Therefore their inheritance shall be for ever, not only in that world, but also in this world. For they shall and must always have enough, though they have not superfluous store, as the wicked have. God is their storehouse, their granary, their wine cellar and all their goods. Therefore also follows:

V.19. They will not be ashamed in the evil time, and they will have enough in the time of trouble.

(25) When war comes, or the time of trouble, they all become ashamed who have put their comfort in their granaries and wine cellars, or in their goods; for they are soon devoured and destroyed. So they stand in disgrace and with shame, who before were so brave and proud. But the righteous, because God is their comfort and supply, may not lack; all the angels would rather come from heaven and feed them. For the supply does not let them lack, in whom they trust, neither temporally nor eternally. But what about the wicked? Listen:

V. 20. For the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD: though they be as the pleasant pasture, yet shall they all be as the smoke becometh all.

26 This is ever spoken near, and contemptuously judged the great, mighty, rich nobles. He says: "They would be the richest, most delicious meadow, if there were enough growing inside; as they are, because they have enough. They are the most golden, rich pasture in the world; yet they must perish, yea, perish, and all become as the smoke. Where are they who were before and had great good? It is

1) Jenaer: "welchs". In the first adaptation: "wilch".

none of them in remembrance; but the righteous are in good remembrance and in all honor. Therefore, dear child, let them be rich as they will; look to the end, and you will find that all their things are smoke, because they are God's enemies, and because they attack and persecute his own. In addition, let this also comfort you, that he calls them God's enemies, when until now they have only been called your enemies, so that you may know how God takes care of you, that your enemies are his enemies.

V. 21. The wicked boreth and payeth not: but the righteous is merciful and mild.

(27) Now this is a comforting distinction of goods, that the goods of the wicked are not only perishable and come to an end, but are also evil goods and damnable, because they are gathered into heaps and not given to the poor, which is contrary to the nature of goods.

(28) But the righteous man's goods not only have no end, because he trusts in God and waits for his goods from him, but they are also very useful goods, which are shared with others and not gathered into a heap. Thus he has enough without all temporal supply, and also gives enough to others. That is called a right good. If you do not have much, it is divine and useful. The wicked have much, but it is unchristian and useless.

29. But that he says, "The wicked borroweth," is not to be understood that the rich borrow goods from men, but it is said in a simile and proverb, As he that borroweth much, and payeth not, striveth not to sit long in the good: Thus all the rich and wicked receive much from God, gather and borrow from Him, and yet pay Him not, that they may distribute to the poor as it is given them; therefore their goods shall come to an evil end, and vanish as smoke. That this is the opinion proves that he holds them against each other, the wicked and the righteous; the one gives, the other does not, and yet both receive from God. Therefore the receiving of the wicked is compared to borrowing and not paying. But the good of the righteous is not borrowing, nor debt, but freely received from God, and used profitably, for him and his neighbor.

V. 22 For his blessed inherit the land, but his cursed shall be cut off.

(30) Behold, he calls the ungodly rich God's reprobates, and the faithful God's reprobates, that nothing may grieve thee, nor hinder thy faith, their great goods and thy poverty. What more do you want? Is that not comfort enough for patience? If thou hast not superfluous as they have, yet shalt thou have enough, and possess the land. Not that thou shouldest be lord of the world, but that thou shouldest have good enough on earth, and dwell in the land with good peace. For God gives you temporally and eternally, so that you may trust in Him, even though you may be maligned and damaged by the wicked. Again, the ungodly rich, though they have a time to spare, yet shall they perish, and not sit down in the land and good things; they shall surely be cut off, and another set in three, because God hath maled them, and withholden His grace from them, both for time and for ever. For they believe not in him, though they be given and endowed of men.

31 Therefore, where the righteous are, there they have enough on earth, and remain seated in good. Again, the wicked are rooted out where they sit in goods. This is proved by all the principalities, kingdoms and great estates that we see passing from one generation to another.

(32) Behold, the judgment of temporal goods is lately determined, that the righteous shall have enough, and the unrighteous shall perish; because the righteous trusteth in God, and hath good use of goods; but the wicked trusteth not, and hath no good use of them. Thus we read that Abraham and Lot were rich, and gladly lodged pilgrims. Therefore, though they had no land or store of their own, yet they sat in the land, and had plenty.

V. 23. The man's walks are encouraged by God, and he delights in his ways.

Behold the consolation! Not only will you have plenty of time, but everything you do, your whole life and way of life, even against the wicked, will be swift and continue, because you trust in God,

and surrender yourself and your cause to him, standing by him in all your life. In this way you will make him pleased, desirous and equally eager to promote your way and conduct. But against this see that such a godly way is not promoted, even prevented and rejected by the ungodly. This is what nature resents. Therefore, we must take comfort in the fact that God is pleased with and promotes our nature, not the obstacle and rejection of the wicked.

V. 24 If it falls, it will not be thrown away, for the Lord will keep it in His hand.

(34) Falling may be understood to mean that the righteous sometimes sins, but gets up again, as Solomon says (Proverbs 24:16). But we will leave that alone, and stay on the course, that falling here means as much as if he once succumbed, and the wicked succumbed. As David, when he was chased by Saul and Absalom [1 Sam. 23, 1. ff. 2 Sam. 15, 1. ff.], and Christ, when he was crucified [Matth. 27]. For such a fall does not last long; God does not leave him lying and cast away, but takes hold of his hand and raises him up again, so that he must stand.

(35) With this the Spirit comforts and answers the secret thoughts that someone might have and say to himself, "Yes, I have seen that the righteous man has fallen, and that his cause has fallen into ashes before the wicked. Yes, he says, dear child, let that also be; he may fall, but he will not remain lying there and be rejected; he must rise again, even though all the world has despaired of it. For God catches him by the hand and raises him up again.

V. 25. I have been young and have grown old, and have never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed going after bread.

(36) Behold, he puts his own experience as more assurance. And it is also true that daily experience gives it, and all men must confess that it is so. But if any man be left to seek bread, it is certain that his faith is broken; wherefore he is rightly left.

(37) But this seeking bread, or going for bread, must be understood so that he does not suffer hunger or die of hunger, even though he is poor and has little before. He will certainly be fed, if he does not have leftovers until the next day; if one person does not give him, another will give him; his food must certainly come, even though those who do not give and help him sin. For poor Lazarus, Luc. 16, 20, even though the rich man gave him nothing, he was still fed, even though he was poor. God does not take poverty from His saints, but He does not let them perish or perish.

V. 26. Daily he is merciful and lends, and his seed will be blessed.

38 This is said of the righteous man that hath, whether he be so as to have children; if he already distribute, give, and lend daily, yet he and his child shall have enough. For the blessing is, that they shall have enough here and there, not at all lacking in the food of the body, and the salvation of the soul, though at times it be not left.

(39) Thus we have how God deals with the faithful in temporal food and in their things, that we may be sure in both things that he will not leave us, and that we shall have enough food for this. And so it will certainly be, if we believe, and do not let the happiness of the wicked spoil us or move us. Therefore he repeats and concludes again, saying:

V. 27. Forsake evil, and do good, and abide forever.

40 As if to say, Let God take care, do only what is good, and let nothing move you to do evil; remain only as you are forever, and let go what goes. As St. Peter also says [1 Ep. 5, 7.], "Cast on him all your care, for he bears care over us." And Ps. 55, 23. "Cast all your concern upon GOD, and he will well supply or provide for you, and not leave you to be moved forever."

V. 28 For the LORD loveth righteousness, and forsaketh not his saints: they shall be preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

41. Do not worry that your right will perish; it is not possible. For God loves justice, therefore it must be preserved, and the righteous must not be abandoned. If he were an idol who loved injustice or was hostile to what is right, like godless men, you would have cause to worry and fear. But now you know that he loves right: What dost thou care for? what dost thou fear? what dost thou doubt? Eternally, not only temporally, shall his saints be preserved, and the wicked with child, and all thine own, shall be cut off.

The saints here are not called those who are in heaven, of whom the Scriptures seldom speak, but commonly those who live on earth, who believe in God, and through the same faith have the grace of God and the Spirit, from which they are called saints; as we all are, if we truly believe.

V. 29: The righteous inherit the land and dwell in it forever.

43] That is, as it is said above 37 ff. it is said, they have enough on earth, they must not wait anywhere but with God, where they dwell in the world. For God does not leave them, but if He leaves them, they are certainly unrighteous and godless, without faith and trust in God. And so it is decided that we only do well, and remain on the path and in the land, letting him take care and do it. Now follows what is the matter of the righteous, so that such a nature arises between him and the wicked.

V. 30: The mouth of the righteous deals in wisdom, and his tongue speaks of judgment.

The wicked do not want to hear the divine wisdom and right, persecute, condemn and blaspheme it for foolishness and injustice, and the same scoundrels feel good for a while because of it. This, then, vexes and naturally moves the righteous, 1) and they are provoked thereby to evil and revenge or impatience.

45Therefore, this Psalm teaches them to keep still and always continue, always teaching, writing and speaking such wisdom and law that God will not let them go.

Those let bite, rage, gnash teeth, blaspheme, strike, bare sword, draw bow, pile up and strengthen 2c., as is said. For God will do it well, if we only wait and always stay on track, and for their sake do not stop or slacken (to do good). In the end, the verdict of this verse must remain and be made known like the bright noon, that the righteous have spoken rightly and wisely, and the wicked have been fools and unrighteous.

V. 31. The law of his God is in his heart, his footsteps do not slip.

(46) Therefore he speaks rightly and writes wisdom, that God's law is not in the book, (2) not in the ears, not on the tongue, but in his heart. No one can rightly understand God's law unless it is in his heart to love it and live by it, which is what faith in God does. Therefore, though the wicked speak much of God and His law, and boast of Scripture teachers and experience, they never speak rightly or wisely. For they do not have it in their hearts; therefore they do not understand it, they are deceived by the appearance that they are leading the words and the Scriptures, and because of this they rage and persecute the righteous.

(47) The footsteps of the righteous do not slip, but walk freely and confidently in a good conscience, because he is certain of the matter and may not be deceived by the law and doctrines of men. But the wicked fall and slip back and forth all the time, having no sure footing, because they do not rightly understand God's law apart from faith. And so they go to and fro, as their conceit leads them, or men teach law, now this, now that work; now they are taught otherwise, now so, and slip where they are led with their noses, one blind man to another. Therefore, as they do not understand rightly, so they do not walk rightly; nor do they rage for such their vile doctrine and life against the certain doctrine and life of the righteous, ever wanting to confirm their thing alone.

1) Jenaer and Erlanger: "den"; first treatment: die. - Immediately following is "Widergelten" - to give payment against it.

2) Erlanger: "Bauche" instead of: Buche. Shortly before: "richtet" instead of: "tichtet" (seals).

V. 32: The wicked looks at the righteous and intends to kill him.

48 He is displeased and cannot bear to have his teaching and life punished as an unjust, unwise being. Therefore he thinks no more than how to strengthen his cause. Now he cannot stand before the righteous man, who does not let his wrong go unpunished; therefore his false nature drives him to get rid of the righteous man, to kill him, so that his nature remains right and unpunished; as the pope and his followers always do and still do, whom we can well see that they do not have God's law in their books, let alone in their hearts: Nor do they want to be those who write wisdom and teach right, raging and running about it like mad dogs, without ceasing.

V. 33. But the Lord does not leave him in his hands, nor does he condemn him when he is condemned.

49. God lets the righteous come into their hand, but he does not let him in; they may not restrain him, even if they kill him. Their judgment does not help, even though they boast that they do it in God's stead and in God's name, for God judges the opposite judgment.

50 We see this also in our times. The pope and his followers have condemned John Hus; still no condemnation, no crying, no whining, no raging, no bull, no lead, no seal, no ban helps them; he has always remained outstanding and praised, since no bishop, no university, no king, no prince has been able to do anything against him; which has never been heard of any heretic. The one dead man, the innocent Abel, makes the living Cain, the pope, with all his followers, heretics, apostates, murderers, blasphemers, should they tear themselves apart and burst.

V. 34. Wait upon the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee, and thou shalt inherit the earth. When the wicked are cut off, you will see.

(51) Again he exhorts to trust in God and to do good, so that the un-

1) "has" taken over from the "first" editing.

broken, 2) stupid nature hardly surrenders, and considers on God that it waits for that which it neither sees nor feels anywhere, and expresses itself of that which it visibly feels.

52 Now it is sufficiently said how the possession of the land is to be understood, namely, that a righteous man abides and has enough even on earth. For where he has too little temporally, he has all the more spiritually; as Christ teaches and says [Marc. 10, 29. 30.]: "He who leaves one thing shall have it again a hundredfold in this world, and life eternal."

(53) Though I do not deny that this possession of the earth should be understood, not of any righteous man in particular, but of the congregation and the community; though some may be destroyed in time, yet in the end their seed and doctrine remain above; as the Christians have remained in the world, and the Gentiles have passed away, though many of them have been martyred and destroyed in time by the Gentiles. 112, 1. f. also says: "Blessed is the man who fears God, and delights in His commandments; his seed shall reign on the earth, and the generation of the righteous shall be multiplied" 2c.

54) But, as I said, each one has enough for himself, and God also gives him what he may and asks for; 3) and where he does not give it, the righteous is certainly so willing that he does not want it from God, and forbids God not to give it to him; so completely is he one with God that he has and does not have, as he only wants before God; as Ps. 145, 19. says: "God does the will of those who fear Him, and hears their petition, and helps them."

55) That he says here: "You will see when the wicked are cut off" is not said of a bad seeing, but according to the custom of the Scripture it means, seeing according to his will, or that he would have liked to see long ago; as we say in German: Das wollte ich gern sehen. In this way Ps. 54:9 [Vulg.] says: "Thou hast delivered me out of all evil, and mine eyes have seen mine enemies," that is, I have seen my will in them, that I am delivered and they are destroyed. Item, Ps. 112, 8. [Vulg.]: "The

2) In the first edit: "unleashed".

3) Walch and the Erlanger: "bittes".

The righteous shall not be moved till he see his enemies." Item, Ps. 91:8 [Vulg.], "Thou shalt see with thy eyes, 1) and the punishment of the wicked shalt thou behold." Again, of the enemies Ps. 35, 21 [Vulg.] says: "They have opened their mouth wide, and said, Yea, yea, our eyes have seen," that is, he lies down, it has happened that we would have liked to see long ago. So also Micah 4, 11: Aspici at in Zion oculus noster, "o that our eye would see in Zion", that is, o that Zion would pass over, that we would gladly see. So here also: you will see what you would have liked to see when the wicked are cut off. This way of speaking is almost mean in Scripture. 2)

V. 35. I saw an ungodly man mighty and rooted like a green laurel tree.

Here he uses the other experience as an example and sign of the wicked. Earlier [v. 25] he spoke of an experience of the righteous, that he had never seen anyone forsaken. Here he speaks of an experience of the wicked, how he had passed away, and says: "He was rich, powerful, great, so that everyone was afraid of him, and what he said, did, and left, that was said, done, and left alone. For such a one means the Hebrew little word Aritz [XXXX] which I have previously translated "mighty". It also means that he does this: he boasted and was mighty, stood out, was somewhat special in front of all, spread out and high, just as a laurel tree is always green before other trees and is somewhat special in front of all, especially before the tame trees or garden trees; it is also not a bad bush or low tree, which must also be maintained and cared for, which is not done to the wild trees and cedars. So one must also look and speak to this godless squire: My lord, dear nobleman.

B. 36. As one passed by, behold, there he was, I asked for him, but he was nowhere to be found.

57 David saw such examples in Saul, Ahithophel, Absalom, and the like, who were mighty in their ungodliness, and before you looked, they were gone, so that you would ask and say: Where have they gone? Is it not true that in our time the pope Julius was also such a man? what an arrogant and terrible gentleman was he? But has he not disappeared before you know it? Where is he now? Where is his defiance and splendor? So we should only keep quiet, they will all disappear, who are raging now, and want to destroy the sky and overturn rocks. Let us be silent for a little while and pass by, we will look around and see none of them, if we only trust God.

V. 37. Keep piety, and see what is sincere. For in the end the same will have peace.

58 This is said as much as Paul Titus 2:12: Only be righteous in simple faith toward God, and walk uprightly and honestly; on this alone see, and judge thyself; let the ungodly be ungodly; behold, then thou shalt have peace at last, and thou shalt prosper. The Hebrew language has the way that where we say in German: Es geht ihm wohl, er gehabt sich wohl, es steht wohl um ihn, and in Latin: valere, bene habere etc., it means: have peace. Thus Gen 37:14 Jacob said to his son Joseph, "Go to Shechem to your brothers, and see if they are at peace, and if the cattle are at peace, and tell me again," that is, if they are well. Hence the greeting in the Gospel [Luc. 24, 36. Joh. 20, 19. 21. 26.] comes in Hebrew: Pax vobis, "Peace be unto you", which we say in German: God grant you a good day, good morning, good evening! Item, in parting we say: Farewell! Have a good night! Let it go well with you! This is called pax vobis. So when the wicked is gone, the righteous and the faithful prosper, and are at peace.

V. 38. But the transgressors are destroyed with one another, and the wicked are finally cut off.

1) In the Jena, "your desire" is inserted here, which should not be. Latin: considerabis.

2) That is, in the Vulgate.

(59) This is the contradiction: the righteous remain, and prosper; the apostates perish, and perish afterward and at the last.

(60) These two verses may well be understood of the doctrines, inheritances, and goods left by both parts, that the opinion may be, The righteous, that which they leave behind them endureth, and prospereth; as it is said above in the 26th verse, That the children of the righteous also shall have enough; but that which the wicked leave behind them perisheth, and perisheth: as Psalm 109:13 [Vulg. As it is said in the 26th verse, that the children of the righteous will have enough; but all that the wicked leave behind them disappears and perishes; as Psalm 109:13 says, "His memory shall be destroyed in one member of the family." This is also seen daily in experience.

V. 39. But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord, who is their strength in time of trouble.

61. The reason for the previous two verses is: for the salvation of the wicked is from themselves, and their strength is their own power; they are great, much, rich and mighty, not allowing God's strength and salvation. But the righteous, who must turn away their face from all that is seen and felt, and trust in God alone, have neither salvation nor strength, because from God, who also does not leave them, and does as they believe and trust him; as this following last verse concludes and says:

V.40. And the LORD shall stand by them, and shall deliver them, and shall deliver them from the wicked, and shall save them; for they trust in him.

62. behold, behold, what a rich promise, great comfort, and superfluous admonition is

that, if we only trust and believe. God helps them, namely in the midst of the evil, does not leave them alone in it, is with them, strengthens them and sustains them. Not only does he help them, but he also saves 1) them, so that they come out. For this Hebrew word actually means: to escape from misfortune and to get away. And because the wicked would be displeased, he expresses them by name, saying, "He will deliver them from the wicked;" whether they are sorry, and their raging will not help them, though they think that the righteous shall not escape them, that he must be destroyed. Third, not only does he save them, but he also helps them forever, so that they will not remain in any misfortune from now on, no matter what happens; and all this because they have trusted in him. He also says Ps. 91:14-16: "Because he trusts in me, I will save him and protect him. For he knows my name, he has called upon me, therefore I will hear him. I will be with him in his affliction, and will bring him out, and will set him in honor, and fill him with length of days, and shew him my salvation."

O of shameful unfaithfulness, disloyalty and damned unbelief, that we do not believe such rich, mighty, comforting promises of God, and so easily fidget in little offences, if we only hear evil words from the wicked. Help God that we may one day have the right faith, which we see demanded in all the Scriptures. Amen.

1) Thus the Erlangen and the first edition; Jenaer: "contains".

The 62nd Psalm.

The title:

A Psalm of David for Jeduthun to sing high.

(1) This psalm was made by David and arranged to be sung by Jeduthun the singer and his companions "on high," that is, with a bright voice; as we read in the first book of Chronicles, Cap. 26, 1. ff. that David ordered some singers to sing high with bright cymbals or bells; but some to sing low with harps, before the golden ark. So he made special psalms for each choir and had them made.

V. 1. ¹⁾ My soul is silent to God, for from Him comes my salvation.

David was a well-trained and experienced man, who, having been educated and tried at the court of King Saul, had seen many a wicked trick, how the court jailers pretended to the king for the sake of money and honor, and placed all their comfort at the king's mercy, and did everything for his love that he wanted, whether it was against God or man. Because of this, he had to suffer much evil from them, since they saw that the king himself was hostile to him and wanted to kill him. Just as Herod caught Peter to please the Jews and persecuted the Christians [Acts 12:3]. Just as we still see in the courts of lords, and have always seen, that the courtiers and financiers, when they see what pleases the princes and lords, and there is hope of catching something, they confidently do and say what they think pleases them; God grant that the poor or the righteous may perish or remain above, so that they may only become rich and high. Yes, this happens not only in the courts of lords, but in all classes of the world. For it is the way of the world that remains so, that one pretends for the sake of enjoyment, and relies on the favor and help of men, and thereby despises God, and gives up the

They are allowed to praise God's word and all righteousness as if they were the very best.

(3) Against such ungodly men David made this psalm as a salutary lesson and warning, teaching us not to rely on men, even if they were lords and kings, but on God alone, and warning us, for there is no good end. As he also says in the 146th Psalm, v. 3. 4: "Do not rely on princes, on the children of men, for he cannot help. For his spirit must go forth, and come again to his earth, and then all his counsels are lost." As if he were to say, "If the favor of men were constant throughout life (which it is not, for: Today friend, tomorrow foe, and as one says especially of princes: Prince's grace, April weather), yet their life is not certain for an hour. Why then do you rely on them, and for their sake despise God, who remains forever, and do such evil against him and your neighbor?"

4. so here he sets himself as an example, as he who in Saul's time saw many of them who relied on Saul, and for his sake did what displeased God and man, but when Saul was dead, they were left with all the shame; like the son of Doeg, who came after Saul's death, and wanted David to pretend that he had slain Saul, 2 Sam. 1, ³⁾ 10.

Therefore he speaks here: It is not for me to place my comfort in princes or men, as the godless courtiers do. I also want to be obedient to the king, to serve him, to seek and promote his best, to help and advise, to support him with body and goods; but that I should rely on him to make me rich, glorious or blessed, that I will leave. For tomorrow the weather would turn, and he would pursue me. And it came to pass, that David was first the dearest of all.

3) The Erlangen edition has: "2 Neg. 2 (2 Sam. 11.)," the latter printed from Walch.

1) The counting of the verses here is different from that of the Bible, because the title is not counted as a verse.

2) In the old editions: im.

I was the servant of Saul, then the most hostile, and I also had to learn that the benevolence of princes is April weather (especially when they are not God-fearing but godless princes). If, then, I did wickedly against God and man for the sake of my lord or of a man, where would I stay if God and man were angry with me? Let the favor of princes and men depart from me, and let the favor of God remain with me. If God's favor remains with me, then the image of man will be found; if it is not found, then let it go to the devil, God's favor is enough for me. But if I lose God's grace, then man's grace will not remain with me; so I will go to the devil with my prince, both with God's and man's displeasure. 1) Then I have done well and made a good job of it.

(6) That he says, "My soul is silent to God," is spoken in Hebrew, where it reads, "My soul's silence is against or to God, that is, I am silent, and shirk among the wicked, who rely on men and lords, throbbing and defying. But I command myself to God, insist and defy Him secretly and silently, so that they do not know it, and take me for a fool, that I do not also lead out, and confidently join in the pestering, and seek money. O what a strange company is there around such a court servant! Saul, the wicked king, had such a servant, and David was a rose among thorns among such wicked courtiers. As without doubt a pious man can be at court, but he must be among the thorns and wait for the thorns at all times.

7. "For from him comes my salvation," he says; that is. Dear, no one will help me but God; he is certain. From him, from him, it is said, from him comes my salvation, that is, all my happiness, wealth, welfare, and what I should have and need. But the wicked say thus: My most holy father the pope, my most gracious emperor, my most gracious king of France, my most gracious lord of Mainz, my most gracious lord of Saxony 2c. will help me. Yes, it lacks otherwise

not that they will die tomorrow, or need help and counsel themselves, as much or more than you do.

V. 2 For he is my refuge, my salvation, my protection; therefore I will abide.

(8) Of course, because you believe this, you are safe, even though it rained and snowed on Turkish and Tartar emperors and angry kings and princes for nine years with all their power, and all the devils with them.

(9) I have translated "refuge" because in Hebrew it is "Zur" [XXX], which means a rock. For we are called a stronghold when we rely on it and take comfort in it. So now he says, "I know that my salvation comes from him. Why? Because I have not set any man, however great, powerful or rich he may be, as a refuge, comfort or salvation for me, nor have I set my heart or hope on him, but I have chosen God for this purpose, from whom alone all happiness and salvation shall and will come to me.

(10) So he calls God his "rock" or "stronghold" because he put his heart's sure and certain confidence in him. His "salvation" because he believes and does not doubt that God will help him with happiness and salvation, even though Saul and all the people abandoned him and gave him nothing, neither village nor city. His "slit" because he hopes and is certain that God will defend him against all evil, even though Saul and all his courtiers seek his destruction and death.

What a fine soul is this, who can sing such a song to God. But how strange it is, since otherwise one finds all courts, and cities, and countries full, which can sing such little songs to the great merchants sometimes for ten guilders, or even less.

V. 3. How long do you pursue the man, that you all slay him as a hanging wall and a broken fence?

12. I would masterfully strike out the verse, even if I had to set myself as an example; but it says [v. 5.], "My soul is silent to GOD." David experienced it that

1) Erlanger: "Hulde"; not a misprint, as "Unhuld" is noted as a variant of Walch.

The hypocrites of the lords are so skillful. Because the king's grace was shining, there was nothing more glorious than David; everyone wanted to be a friend and to love David; and yet their hearts thought, "Let the devil take you away this hour, so that I may take your place and become the king's beloved. But when the king became hostile to him, what they had thought before burst out; every one wanted to court the king, and to do the best for David's destruction; no one was lazy, all of them, all of them wanted to strangle him with such and such a hand; then it went on in the court: Oh that the boys would endure the pestilence, Vitus' dance, and all the curses! especially when the king or his ear-melchers heard it. This is what he says here: "How long do you pursue one," and do you all want him to die? As if he should say: How long do you cling to a man, and despise God, that you are ready to murder for his sake, and seek it day and night? But you have it good to do now, because I am now as an inclined wall and a broken fence. For a wall and a fence that are already hanging to the ground are soon helped to fall down completely.

When a prince, lord, or great lord presses a man, the wall and the fence hang; then the pennies of search come and make themselves believe that their hour has come to cool their little coin and to become knights, and they trample him underfoot, whom they should help up more cheaply, and support the fence and underlay the wall. That is to say, to pull the beard of the dead lion, which they should not have touched alive.

014 So they that helped David to oppress, when Saul was at enmity with him, must take off their little hat before him, because he was by grace. But the world does not do otherwise; one may follow it. Christ himself had to have someone (Judas the betrayer) to help him underfoot, since he was already wanted by the Jews to die; as he says Ps. 41:10: "He who eats my bread helps to trample me underfoot. It goes like this, and must go like this, both in the spiritual and in the temporal regiment, that the bold heroes fight the dead lion, who cannot defend themselves against a living dog. So much is the consolation of men.

V. 4. but they think to overthrow his height, lies please them; with the mouth they bless, but inwardly they curse. Sela.

(15) It is only for this reason that they push him down, and they take his place. For so it is in the world: if a man rise a little, there is no rest till he come to the lowest. Such an evil spirit is the prince of the world, the devil, that he cannot suffer anyone to be great in body, much less to suffer spiritual goods.

Lies please them.

(16) That is, they deal in vain deceit, that they may accomplish such things; they give good words, and there is nothing behind them. This is their pleasure and favor, and they may speak and boast most kindly to him whom they want to destroy, and yet they think, "That all the plague may pass you over! That is, "they praise with their mouths, but inwardly they curse"; that is, in their hearts they wish him all heartache, and yet they say, "My kind services before, what I can do, you will always find me willing. There rely, and bide not, behold what thou shalt eat.

17 O such deceitfulness is most delicious when it comes to spiritual matters of the gospel, where the false brethren and the riffraff want to be Christian brethren, and are desperate ravishers and knaves; yet they think nothing else than that they float above and have honor, yet they have a mouth full of blessings, and how they seek God's honor and the truth.

V. 5. But my soul is silent to God, for my hope is in Him.

(18) Since Saul's courtiers, all the world, even the false spirits are all so false, what should a pious heart do here? Nothing else, but keep silent and be still, let them lie, deceive, think and do evil, and command his cause and himself to God, and hope in him, let them serve men and princes with such lies and false evil deeds, and hope in them, it will be found which hope is the best.

V. 6. God is my refuge, my salvation, and my protection; I will abide.

(19) This verse he repeats again in defiance of false men, and to comfort his heart and the heart of us all. For with it he concludes his example and teaching, in which he taught us what the world is, and how it does, that we should boldly despise it. What is said in the other verse, you may also say here, for it is one verse.

V. 7. With God is my salvation, my glory, the rock of my strength, my confidence is in God.

20 Here he begins to warn and admonish. For he holds God and man against each other. As if to say, "Well, you have heard my example of how things are done in the world, and especially in pants, since the head and best of the world. Now then, hold them up against each other, God and man, and you will certainly find it as I have found it, namely, that "with God is my salvation, my honor," 2c., that is, God wants to and can help, He gives health, happiness and salvation, on which one may rely. He is also my "honor", that is, he also gives good, power and dignity enough, which is honest thing and is kept. For "honor" in the Scripture means not only the good report, but the goods of which the report resounds, as Matt. 6:29: "I say unto you, that Solomon in all his honor was not clothed as one." And Psalm 106:20: "They changed their honor into the image of a calf," that is, their God and worship. But the wicked seek all these things from princes and men.

(21) "The rock of my strength" is the foundation and defiance from which my power and rule are derived. "Strength" means here, as well as almost at all ends, the power or authority to rule, as there is in principality, kingdom, that he may grasp it all in this verse. "My salvation", that is, all my happiness and welfare; "my honor", that is, all my goods and fortune; "my strength", that is, all my power and authority. Summa Summarum: Is there anything I can have on earth, be it health, strength, wealth, honor, reputation, power, authority, and all with each other, that I do not want emperors, kings, princes, nor

If he does not command or trust any man, or if he does not wait for him, he shall stand and fall, abide and go with God. If he keeps it, it is kept, though all the world would fall. If he falleth, it falleth, though all the world would hold it. So also: "My confidence is in God," that is, not only will I wait for all good things from him, but I will defy all adversity under his protection, for I know that he will not abandon me. People always leave, and no confidence is certain.

V. 8. Hope in him always, you nations, pour out your heart before him; God is our confidence. Sela.

(22) Because God is such toward me, O follow me faithfully; he will be such to all of us. I have experienced it, therefore I can advise you comfortingly. Let Saul, pope, emperor, king, princes and everyone be angry; do not be afraid; hope in God, he is not lacking. Again: Let Saul, pope, emperor, king, princes and everyone laugh, comfort, promise, do not hope in them, do not rely on them, they are uncertain, both in 1) body and courage. Body falls, courage changes soon, God remains firm; so that you may rely on God at both times, be it good or bad. But if something is wrong with you, well, there is good counsel, "pour out your heart before him"; only complain freely, do not touch him. Whatever it may be, throw it out before him in heaps, as if you were opening your heart completely to a good friend. He will gladly listen to it, and will also gladly help and advise you. Do not be afraid of him, and do not think it is too much or too big. Come out confidently, and if it should be vain sacks full of want. All out, he is greater, and is able and willing to do more than our infirmities are. Just don't deny him, he is not a man to whom one could put too much begging and pleading. The more you ask, the more he will hear you. Pour out only purely and everything, do not drip and zipple. For he will not dribble nor wriggle, but will shower you with a flood of sin.

23. "He is our confidence," our refuge, and no one else. For all others

find too little that they could let our hearts pour out before them. If I should let out a drop of my heart before the emperor, he himself would have to become a beggar. For he could not satisfy me. What should I then provide myself to him, or have recourse to him, if I should pour out my heart at all, and should do this all the time? It is nothing with people, as follows:

V. 9. but men are vain, people find falsely, on the scales 1) they weigh more lightly than vain.

(24) Thou hast heard what God is; now hear what men are. There is nothing in them, saith he; if thou trustest in them, be sure that thou trustest in nothing; thou shalt surely lack. Yes, he says, if one were to put on a scale, in one bowl the people, in the other vain or nothing, then the people would be lighter than nothing. We Germans make such Hebrew speech thus: Men are less than nothing; what they call vain, that is called nothing to me. As Solomon says, Ecclesiastes 1:2: "It is all vain and a mere vanity," that is, it is nothing with humanity, and nothing at all.

25 Here you ask: How is man nothing, since he is God's creature and creature? Answer: David does not speak of the creature itself, but of the use of the creature; that is, man is a good thing, but he is not really needed. A prince, king, emperor is also a good thing, but one does not really need them. How so? Well, one wants to trust in them and build on them. In such a custom they are nothing. Why is that? They are uncertain, both of their lives and hearts. Sand and water are also good things, but if I were to build a house on them, they would be nothing, and less than nothing. But if I drink water and wash myself, it is not nothing, but a good, useful thing. For it was created for this purpose, and this is its custom. So also ruler, king, emperor, is created, that they keep peace in the land 2c., there they are God's creature and a good thing. But that I should trust in them is nothing. He does not say: Nolite obedire principibus, sed: Nolite

confidere in principibus. Confidere belongs to God alone. I should not sell dirt for gold. Dirt has its custom; but that it should be like gold, that is nothing. For you see that this psalm speaks of faith, trust, confidence, abandonment, all of which titles are too high for men and princes. Although the world does nothing but trust in men and trust nothing in God, that is, it is nothing and trusts in nothing.

But how are men lighter or less than nothing? What can be less than nothing? Answer: What is nothing, no one cares for; but he who trusts in what is nothing has two losses: one, that he finds nothing; the other, that he loses what he puts into it. For he who has nothing bad, has a simple nothing, 2) and uses nothing on it. But he that trusteth in men, because he findeth nothing, loseth also that which he hath hoped for, and so his hope and his food is destroyed because of the nothingness, 2) which he hoped for. Therefore it is well said that a man is less than nothing. For the world does not leave its trust in men, so it is not lacking that it trusts in nothing for nothing. O glorious praise to us all, who are called men, that we are less than nothing. So finely one can help the other.

V. 10 Do not rely on injustice and violence, and do not be vain. If riches fall to you, do not set your heart on them.

27 Here he concludes the psalm with woe, and rebukes the wicked with God's power, judgment and punishment, saying, "You are tickled and pleased to be at court, and to have a gracious lord in Saul; you are safe, think yourselves secure, do not ask questions about it, and even laugh at the fact that you do me wrong, and mock and harm me and my kind. We must suffer it from you, you must not be punished. For your lord is watching over you, and you are relying on him. But I counsel you not to do so. Do not be too sure and certain. Do not be vain, that is, do not rely so much on princes and men who are nothing. For thereby you will

1) Erlanger: would be.

2) In the issues: not.

you vain nothingness, that is, you deal with nothing, and do nothing, [you will also] lack everything.

(28) Yes, I will say further: Even if wealth is rightly given to you by God, do not rely on it, and do not make Mammon your god. For wealth is not given for the purpose of building upon it and defying it, which is also nothing and vain; but that one should use and enjoy it, and share it with others 2c. But men do not leave it, they both build and defy on princes and goods, that is, everywhere on nothing, and act on nothing. For good makes courage; but it is not good, and does not sustain courage. "To have one's heart set on it" is as much as to accept it; "not to have one's heart set on it" is not to accept it, and so to have it as if one did not have it. For so it is in the Hebrew: Ponere super cor, ober, ponere in corde, to take it and let it go to the heart. In the hands should be the good, not in the heart; as Paul says 1 Cor. 7, 31: "that we should need the world as if we did not need it" 2c.

V. 11: For God has spoken once, I have heard twice, that there is power with God.

29 We say this in German: One thing I know, of that I am sure; for God Himself has spoken it, who cannot lie, that God is a Lord, which I have heard more than once; that is, do not be so vain and godless; but if not, but you want to defy men, well, then I say to you that with God there is power, that He is the right emperor, king, prince and lord, even over you and your lords, as over all. Let this be said to you. For God Himself has said it, and I have also heard it many times, and have experienced how He has proved it, and has cast down the mighty from the throne. See to it that [it] does not happen to you in this way with your Lord. Let Saul be Saul, let emperors be emperors, let princes be princes, let men be men,

fear God. For it is a small word, "that God is mighty"; but it has a great and many a cry. It has often been said that He will not spare you, nor will He fail you, though you despise Him and are vain, and for the sake of men offend us and do us wrong.

V. 12. And with thee, O Lord, is goodness, that thou pay every man according to his due.

(30) Just as he has power to punish all the wicked mightily, and cannot escape him; for he alone is Lord, and all rule is his and his; so again, he is also kind and merciful, that he helps the wretched, and cannot suffer them to perish, and finally to succumb to hypocrites and saints, and be forsaken. But as it is written in Luke 1:52, even as he casteth out the mighty from their seats, so he exalteth the lowly also; the former by his power, the latter by his goodness; as follows:

31. that thou mayest recompense every man according to his deserts. He repays the wicked with violence, just as they have used violence; he repays the wretched with kindness and grace, just as they have been kind and patient, without violence. But the world does not ask anything about it, always continues with its vanity and iniquity. God also allows this to happen and continues with his power and goodness, so that the one word, among all the other words of God, may only become many examples, and many histories of the one text occur, how he overthrows and breaks the great men, as a mighty Lord, and helps the wretched abandoned, as a gracious, kind father.

32 Thus he did with Saul and David. So he does now with the priest and the gospel, with the bishops and the Christians, and will do it still more, until they perish, and learn that it is true what David says here: It is one word of God that he is mighty and good; but it is heard many times and often experienced. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

The 94th Psalm.

V. 1. Lord, God of vengeance, break forth, God of vengeance.

(1) This psalm, as may well be understood, is a common prayer of all God's pious children and spiritual people against all their persecutors; so that it may be prayed from the beginning of the world to the end, by all pious, godly people, whether they be Jews, or Christians, or patriarchs. For they must all suffer these two common persecutors who are accused in this psalm. First, the tyrants who persecute the body for the sake of the word, with violence; second, the false teachers, heretics and mobs who persecute souls with lies and hypocrisy.

2. Therefore we may well pray this psalm in our time against the pope, bishops, princes and rulers, who persecute us with violence in the flesh for the sake of the gospel; and against the spiritualists, who persecute us spiritually with a false and perverse interpretation of the Scriptures; just as the righteous, upright Jews prayed the same against the Gentiles who raged around them and persecuted them without ceasing, and against the false prophets who were among them, and who deceived the people with a wrong understanding of the Scriptures. Thus he speaks:

(3) O Lord, who art a God of vengeance, that is, who alone art the avenger and punisher of all wickedness, both of the flesh and of the spirit. And he puts twice "God of vengeance," as those are wont to do who speak vehemently and with great earnestness, the same saying one thing many times, that they may move God; but also beside this to indicate that he accuses two persecutors, and asks for two vengeancees or punishments, both on tyrants and heretics.

4 But it is a Hebrew speech that he says: "God of vengeance", that is, who alone should and can avenge. Such way

St. Paul also often uses, as Rom. 15, 13: "The GOD of hope"; item [Rom. 15, 5.]: "GOD of patience and comfort." And 2 Cor. 1, 3.: "Praised be GOD, the Father of all mercy, and GOD of comfort," that is, GOD who gives hope, patience, comfort. So also here, "GOD of vengeance", that is, he who does vengeance. For of his works the Scripture gives him names. But since no one can do such works except God alone, no one can carry the names of such works except He alone. No one can comfort, give hope, make patient," and so on, but God alone; so no one can punish sin and avenge evil but He alone. For how should men be able to avenge all wickedness, if they do not know all kinds of wickedness? Yes, that which many consider virtue, which is nevertheless evil, and worthy of vengeance; just as the wicked consider their doctrine and works good, and want to have them unspotted and unpunished, if it is nevertheless vain twofold wickedness. Therefore, the name "God of vengeance" will remain unique to God, as "God of patience" and "God of hope."

5 "Break forth," he says. For the word "hophia" means to come forth, to break heralls like a brightness, and to be seen, and to come in daylight, that every man may see it; as Moses saith, 5th book, chap. 33, 2: "The Lord came full Sinai, from Seir he went out, and from Paran he broke forth." So he also wants to say here: Tyrants and false prophets have gained the upper hand, they have come out and let themselves be seen, and they go on their way; but you keep quiet, hide yourself as if you were buried, and can no longer; for you do not defend and punish such wickedness. Therefore, we pray, break forth once, peek out, and let your face be seen against them; and that justly. For you are a God of vengeance; it behooves you to avenge and punish. Avenge thyself; for vengeance is thy work, and is now so highly needed,

1) Taken from Walch's old edition. In the other editions: Persecution. Our reading is confirmed by the following (s 3 z. E., but especially §7 and §9f.).

Why do you hide yourself in the darkness and not let anyone see you?

(6) Here the question arises: how pious, spiritual people can only ask for revenge, because Christ says Matth. 5, 44: "Pray for your persecutors, do good to those who hate you, love your enemies"? Summa, it is against the love of one's neighbor to desire vengeance and punishment, but rather to do good and desire it, Rom. 12, 17. Answer: Faith and love are two different things. Faith suffers nothing, love suffers everything; faith curses, love blesses; faith seeks vengeance and punishment, love seeks sparing and forgiving. Therefore, when it comes to faith and God's word, it is no longer a matter of love or patience, but of vain anger, jealousy and reproach. All the prophets have done the same, that they have not shown patience or mercy in matters of faith. But because the following psalm is worse, and not only asks for vengeance, but also curses, we will leave it there, and then give a further answer.

V. 2. Arise, you judge of the earth, repay the worthy according to their deeds.

(7) As God alone is the avenger, so he alone is the judge on earth. For everything that the authorities judge and avenge is done by his command and order, as if he did it himself. But what they cannot judge nor avenge, that he does, so that it is all true that he alone is the avenger and judge on earth; as also Ps. 7:9 says, "The Lord is judge over the people." Since he is the avenger and judge, pious people ask that he rise up, that is, that he sit up in his chair as a judge, and prove his work, and not let himself be oppressed as if he were nothing. He makes it all twofold in this prayer; he calls upon God as an avenger and judge, as if it were not enough on the avenger. For he is in earnest, and asks against two kinds of enemies, as [§1] is said. And very finely he asks vengeance on the tyrants, and judgment on the false teachers. For the tyrants have no appearance and use force, therefore they are worthy of vengeance and are already condemned; but the ruffians adorn themselves and have an appearance, therefore they must be condemned by judgment and sentence.

(8) Here he does not only mean the "arrogant ones" who are arrogant in heart, but who, by persecuting and seducing (for he means both tyrants and heretics by this), have got the upper hand and prevail, as if they had already won and subdued the pious. Which is also the nature of the word "Hoffahrt" or "Hochfahrt", that it means those who ride high and hover above, and the Hebrew word "Geym" [XXXX] also reads like that, as also of God himself Moses, 2nd book, Cap. 15, 11, sings: "Der HErr fähret hoch her" 2c. that the meaning is:

9) Is it not time to judge and avenge? 1) Have you not kept silent until both tyrants and heretics have prevailed, have ridden high, have shone as the victors, and have completely subdued us, that they alone are everything, and we are nothing. And when I mention the two words "tyrants" and "heretics", I want to understand them to mean the two kinds of persecutors of all God's good children; so that I do not have to mention the pagans and false prophets in the Old Testament, the tyrants and heretics in the New Testament, and the rulers and enthusiasts in our times. For I will thereby indicate all kinds of persecutors of the Word, who have been at all times, still are, and will be, who are of two kinds, as [§ 1] is said.

V. 3. Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the ungodly rejoice?

(10) That is, you let them come so far away and prevail that they are sure and are already boasting, rejoicing, singing and shouting, as if it were certain that [it] is lost with us; and you let such triumph last so long, and you watch. Would a pious man think that it is nothing with you and with your words. But God does not do otherwise; he lets them go so that we may pray. And here you see that he calls twice "ungodly" to accuse the two persecutors 2c.

V. 4. They speak freely, stiff-necked, all evildoers speak.

11 This verse cannot be given in German as it is in Hebrew, therefore

we must help him. So he wants to say: Both, tyrants and heretics, have become so powerful that the tyrants wash and talk about their things freely: Thus the tyrants freely wash and talk about their things, as if their thing alone were everything, and our thing nothing at all. Similarly, the heretics have also taken to washing, so that nothing is heard but their dreams. Our doctrine and faith can scarcely be moved by this. For this is how it is, where heresies arise, they break in and increase, so that nothing else is respected or heard, as St. Paul says in 2 Thess. 2, 11: "God sends strong error among them"; and again in 2 Tim. 3, 8: "They are very contrary to the truth. Item, v. 13: "The ungodly increase in evil, deceive and are deceived" 2c.

(12) Therefore in Hebrew it is thus, They foam with speeches of old, and all the wicked make themselves washable. As a boiling pot with bubbles foams and boils over, so they foam and boil over with much washing, of which their heart is full. For it boils and boils with great heat and desire for their dreams, and can neither be silent nor listen to others.

(13) He calls their thing, of which they speak, old, that is, stiff, firm, and strong, which is not new. For what is new is not yet accepted, and does not yet hold fast, that can be bent, steered or changed; but what is old is accepted and holds hard and fast, that one is used to and likes to stay with. Old dogs are not good to tame; so no one can make old husks pious. So, the heretics are stiff and rigid on their doctrine, of which they talk a lot. So also Hanna sings 1 Sam. 2, 3: "Let the old things remain out of your mouth"; and Ps. 31, 19: "Let the lips be silent that speak old things against the righteous", that is, stiff and stiff-necked; and Ps. 75, 6: "Lift not up your horn, speak not old things."

V. 5. Lord, they have crushed your people, and your inheritance they have destroyed.

(14) This is what the tyrants do, who violently persecute the word of God, kill and torment the people for it; yes, the heretics also help and advise. He complains to God and asks for vengeance. This is what the Gentiles did to the Jews, the

Romans to the Christians, and now to us the bishops and princes. But as it happened to those, so it will also happen to these. For God cannot despise such prayer, since he is admonished that his people and his inheritance 1) will be destroyed.

V. 6. Widows and strangers they strangle, and kill the fatherless.

(15) So cruel are the tyrants and heretics, and so sure that they persecute not only the people of God, but also do not spare the most miserable among the people, as widows and orphans, to whom one should be merciful before others. It is a merciless thing about the persecutors of the word of God. For the devil rides them even more than all others. For the devil is the enemy of God's word above all other things.

V. 7 And say, The LORD seeth it not, and the God of Jacob perceiveth it not.

(16) It is not that they do not think anything of God, for there is no quarrel about God, they all confess God; indeed, the persecutors think that God is with them and that they are doing God service by persecuting the pious; but it is about the word and works of God. The persecutors do not want it to be God's word, but condemn it, and consider the pious to be boys and deceivers. Therefore they say: Let us strangle the deceivers, for their God is nothing, they lie about what they say, their God neither sees [nor] hears, 2) and will nor can avenge this on us, even if he wants to. So very certain, stiff and sure they go in their mind and unbelief. 3)

V. 8 Remember, you fools among the people, and you fools, when will you become wise?

(17) It displeases the prophet, and all Christians, that he should not be taken for God, whose word they boast of; therefore he reproaches them for the sake of God, for defending his honor, calling them "fools" and "fools among the people," when they pretend to be wise,

1) Erlanger: Ehr.

2) Wittenberger and Erlanger: "siehet weder höret"; Jenaer: "siehet noch höret".

3) Erlanger: Faith.

and are considered to be excellent teachers. But he says: They are fools and fool the people with themselves.

V. 9. He who planted the ear, should he not hear? He who made the eye, should he not see?

(18) That is, our God, whose word we have, whose work we preach, is the true God, Creator of all things; and ye blaspheme him, saying, He seeth and knoweth nothing. Rather, your God is vain and nothing, as your thoughts are; as follows. If then he is the true God, how should he give others to hear and see what is good and useful to them, and should not himself see or hear what concerns him, what is done against him or for him? Then he would have to give something that he does not have himself. But since he gives ears and eyes, you must be blind and foolish fools who do not know him, because you say that he does not see or hear.

V. 10. He who chastises the Gentiles, should he not chastise? He who teaches men what they know.

(19) That the nations and all the world should punish evil, and chasten the wicked children and boys, they have from our God, who giveth them to know and to do it. Should he not be able to punish and chastise those who do evil against him? Can you punish what is evil in your sight? Should he not punish what is evil in his sight, if you have it from him? Can ye see and hear what is evil or good in your sight, though ye be fools in his sight: should he not see and hear what is evil or good in his sight, if he giveth you both to see and to hear? even as Christ saith Matt. 7:11, "Can ye give good things unto your children, though ye be evil: should not your Father from heaven give good things unto them that ask him?" For God gives you these things and everything else you know. But such scolding does not help; they remain on their old and stiff-necked head in their vanity. Therefore, it follows:

V. 11. The Lord knows the thoughts of men, that they are nothing.

020 As if to say, It is in vain, they are not converted, they continue, and think that their

The thing they both intend against us and for themselves should go out like this. But this is the best, and our comfort, that they will be missing. For God laughs and mocks them with their clever thoughts and excellent schemes. For he knoweth that they are vain, that is, they are nothing, and shall come to nothing; who only could persevere. For it is only a little while, and their thing shall come to nothing in the sight of all, as it is nothing in himself; as the 33rd Psalm, v. 10, 11, saith unto me, The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought, and maketh the thoughts of the nations to fail. But the counsel of the LORD endureth for ever, the thoughts of his heart for ever." And the other Psalm, v. 1. 2, also testifies that the 1) nations rage in vain, and kings rebel in vain, and princes counsel uselessly against the Lord and his Christ. For he laugheth at them, and mocketh them, because they will not bring it forth. And Ps. 21:12: "They would do thee evil, and devised devices which they could not perform." St. Paul, 1 Cor. 3, 20, puts this saying thus: "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." For the wise among men are the ones who are most concerned with suggestions, and they want to accomplish much, to advise everyone and to straighten out the world. But all is lacking.

Blessed is he, O LORD, whom thou chastenest and teacheest by thy law.

(21) Give thanks unto God, saith he, and it is a great mercy to him that knoweth these things, that the devices and doings of the wicked are vain, and do not stand, though they be sure of the thing, and lie above, so mightily that they boast of it, and sing, and say, and wash, and chatter. But the cause of the pious must be nothing; indeed, they are killed and persecuted, as is said above [14:16].

(22) Now reason and nature can do nothing, and does not know that such a being is nothing. For it judges as it feels, and thinks no further; it cannot see that which is future and not yet there; it clings to the present. That is why he says that God must be the disciplinarian here and teach such things. And good to those whom he teaches!

1) "The" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Erlanger.

But where does he teach it? Does he teach any particular thing to any man? By no means; but by his law he teacheth it, that is, in the holy scriptures he teacheth it unto us. There we find the proverbs and examples that tell us how the wicked do not persevere in their deeds, and how they have failed in every way. For behold, as Pharaoh, Sihon, Og, and all the kings of the Gentiles, and throughout the whole Bible, so thou findest that their thoughts have always failed them. The 73rd Psalm, v. 16, 17, also speaks in the same way. I thought to hear it, but it was a trouble to me (that is, I could not hear it by reason), until I entered into the sanctuary of God, and perceived their end"; that is, I found it in the holy scriptures, then I learned to see, not the present, but their end, and how it would go out with them afterward; then I saw that there was nothing with them, however great it seemed.

024 This is the answer to the question of the weak, when they say, Thou sayest that there is nothing in the works of the wicked, but I see that they do great things? Answer: They must begin something, but look how they end it. For their plans are not to begin, but to do. The great Alexander began many and great things, which he himself respected nothing; but his purpose and end was much greater, namely, to win the whole world; but I think he lacked it. The Romans also had it in mind to make an eternal empire, as Virgilius 2) speaks: Imperium sine fine; I mean, it was also lacking. The Turk has now also done much, and has it still much greater in mind; but the same sense must also be missing to him. How has the pope, great kings and princes been so grievously lacking this time, and still lack daily? They still do not fear God, and do not desist from their ungodly attempts, do not believe in God and do not ask Him for mercy, nor do they command Him in the matter; therefore, they are all lacking and falling short.

(25) But we are really speaking here of the wicked's wickedness, which they have against the word of God and against the righteous. For if

1) In the old editions: leret.

2) VirZ. ^:tzntzis, lid. I, v. 278.

When one wicked man fights against another, God wills it; this comfort does not belong there. For the Scripture does not comfort the wicked, nor does it give them any promise, even though the sure and presumptuous indications are always lacking there. So this is the comfort of the Scripture, that it teaches us not to see how the wicked begin, but to wait and see how they bring forth that which they have in mind. They have it in mind to destroy God's people and word. This is the cancerous process, that they themselves go to ruin, and God remains with His own, even though some are killed and persecuted at the beginning. St. Paul also testifies to the Scriptures, Romans 15:4: "That which is written is written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope"; as the following verse also says:

V. 13: That he may be quiet in the evil time, until the pit be prepared for the wicked.

26) "Be still," that is, be patient, and do not rage nor be angry against the persecutors who make evil time for him. He calls "evil time" the time when tyrants and heretics rage, that is, begin their thing. For the tyrants persecute body and good. The heretics persecute soul and spirit. How can there be a good time when body and soul are in danger every day? St. Paul also says [Eph. 5:16], "For the time is evil," and agrees with this psalm, also in the next verse, which teaches us to be comforted by the Scriptures and to be patient in all kinds of persecution. This, in short, is the nature of the Gospel or God's Word. When it comes, the time is evil; for the devil cannot bear it, so he advances and arouses tyrants and heretics, so that there is never less peace, never more evil people, and never more trouble, than in the time of grace and peace; that is, when one preaches about God's grace and peace, which is done through the gospel, then one is surprised that people are so angry, more than before. But it must be so; for here you hear him complaining of evil times, and teaching to be quiet and patient, which is not needed in good times.

3) Jenaer: Patience instead of: Hope.

27. Such quietness and patience shall not be forever, for the end is already here. For the wicked will not carry it out, as it is said, "Their pit and destruction is present"; and as St. Peter [2 Ep. 2, 1.] agrees with this verse, saying, "They bring upon themselves swift condemnation." For in Hebrew this text may also read thus: Till the destruction of the wicked be digged. The words "destruction" and "pit" are almost one. Now all these things must God teach in the evil time, that one may believe that the wicked shall perish. [Reason thinks no differently, for the pious shall perish, and the wicked shall remain forever; so very desolate is it.

V.14. For the LORD will not cast off his people, nor forsake 1) his inheritance.

28 Here you hear that this Psalm actually speaks of the plots of the wicked against God's people. For God cannot leave His own, that is certain, as He says here. Therefore it is impossible for the wicked to carry out their plans, they must be lacking, unless God is not God; only that [it] is a matter of a little evil time, in which one is quiet and patient, that the wicked begin their thing, and after that they are put to shame; as also the 91st Psalm, v. 8, says: "You will see with your eyes and see how the wicked are repaid." If you do not see it here, but are killed, you will come to life again and see it in that life. But the living will also see it in this life.

Now this verse is a mighty consolation and defiance to the pious, and a terrible judgment against tyrants and heretics, whoever believes it. For it will certainly be so, even if a thousand and a thousand popes, emperors, princes, scholars, and heretics were sitting on top of each other; just as the following verse says:

V.15. For judgment will be restored, and it will be followed by all the upright in heart.

30 As much as I know Hebrew, it seems to me to read like this in Hebrew: Demi justice

will still bring back justice; that is, although in the evil time violence goes for justice, and hypocrisy for truth; yet in the end injustice and appearance will not stand, but righteousness will come and be revealed, and will put injustice to shame, and praise justice. And even though not all the world will fall to it, yet the righteous and those who are honest and upright will do so, so that justice may remain and injustice perish.

31) See the example of John Hus, who was condemned in the evil time with violence and injustice; now righteousness has been revealed, and his right is praised, since nothing could help all that the whole papacy has tried with so much banishing, preaching, burning, raving, their attempts have been destroyed. This is what happened to the Jews with Christ, and to the Romans with the Christians 2c.

V. 16: Who stands with me against the wicked? Who will stand with me against the wicked?

Here he begins to thank God for such comfort and understanding; thus he wants to say: In the raging of the wicked there was no one else to help me, I was alone and abandoned, everyone thought that it was over with me, the wicked had won; as another Psalm also says [Ps. 25, 16]: "Lord, have mercy on me, for I am alone", that is, no one comforts me, everyone despairs of me, without God alone, who is my Master and Teacher 2); as follows:

V. 17. If the Lord were not my helper, my soul would have to remain in silence.

33. it would be lost with me, the wicked would lead their way out finely and well against me, if it stood with me and lay with the people; for they all put me off, so my heart itself wriggles. But God is the one who gives me patience, teaches me otherwise, and overthrows the wicked over and against all reason. But he allows it to happen so horribly through the wicked, that he teaches me that I would be lost without his help, and I realize that my strength is nothing. So this verse with the two that follow is nothing but a thanksgiving.

1) Jenaer: his heirs.

2) Jenaer: Leader.

The word for grace, that God comforts us in evil time, when tyrants and heretics rage; as we have heard.

34 "Remaining in silence," which is called "duma" in Hebrew, is another silence, as is said above [26], namely, when a thing is no longer anything at all, which is no longer seen, nor heard, nor felt; as the dead are, who have completely passed out of sight and sight. Therefore it is taken by the Hebrews for hell, that is, for the place where the dead are (be it what it may). So he wants to say here: "My soul", that is, my life, would even have been destroyed, like a dead and buried man. For such was his mind in the evil time.

V. 18. When I thought my foot had fallen, feed me, O Lord, your goodness.

35 This is also a piece of thanksgiving, wherein he shows what thoughts he had in the evil time. Thus I thought," he says, "my foot is falling;" that is, I began to despair, and wept not otherwise, that I should perish, and the wicked endure forever. For every real trial is meant to bring a man to despair, and does not appear otherwise than that the adversaries have won and he has lost. So then "the goodness of God" comes and "comforts him," that is, he comforts him through the holy Scriptures, as it is said above [H 25] that the wicked shall not be led away, and that those who are his shall not be forsaken.

V. 19. When I had much trouble inwardly, thy consolations gladdened my soul.

The verse is almost the same as the previous one. For the previous verse reports the thoughts of despair he had in the evil time, and how he received refreshment from God's grace in the Scriptures. But this verse speaks of the various thoughts that a man has in such despair, how he wants or wants to get away. He thinks here and there, and searches all corners and holes, but finds none. So he says: "When I was in such distress, and my thoughts were beating me, seeking comfort here and there, and yet found nothing, you came with your comfort and made me happy, and kept yourself friendly.

with sayings and examples of the holy scriptures, that I may say, Blessed is he whom thou chastenest and teacheest by thy law.

V. 20. Has the unholy chair also fellowship with thee, which deviseth work with commandments?

(37) Fie, what do our teachers and preachers do that they do not teach how to comfort souls with the Scriptures? How they do not resemble or rhyme with you, and their chair has no fellowship with you. You teach much differently than they do. They sit on the chair; they are teachers, they have the keys to knowledge; but what do they teach? They teach sorrow and heartache. For the little word havvoth (XXX) means misfortune and heartache; as we say in German of a boy: You will cause misfortune, that is, you will commit a misdeed, since you will encounter heartache and all evil. So that misfortune here means both, the misdeed and the punishment. So here he calls the chair Havvoth, the wretched preachers, who put people to all heartache, so that they teach and live unrighteously; thereby they fall into God's punishment. They can bind, bind up, and mislead the consciences, but they cannot comfort and refresh.

(38) So also, "they make work of commandments," that is, they make many laws, command this and that, and make much work for the people; as Christ says Matt. 23:4: "They bind intolerable burdens, and lay them upon men's necks," and all this to move God to avert such plagues and persecution, and to ward off evil with works; since they should teach patience, and trust in God's grace and mercy. Just as in our times, when there is an accident, people preach that one should go on procession, fast, do this and that. Summa, work makes not only the people with terrible commandments, but also the bells, and candles, and incense, and the like. But no one teaches patience nor God's goodness. This is what the teachers of the Jews did, as he complains here. For the word "chok" that

This is actually called the commandments, which are ordered and set daily, which are called ceremonias or outward giving, and says that the wretched chair invents and invents them; that is, God did not command them, but they spin it out of their own heads.

V. 21. They set themselves against the soul of the righteous, and condemn innocent blood.

39. they may well do so, that when they should teach comfort and God's grace, they stand so firm, and hold so stiffly over their invented commandments, that where one will not keep it, or speaks against it (as the righteous do), there is neither grace nor patience. "They arm themselves against them", all weapons, force and power they arouse against them, and this must be the greatest battle, the greatest armor, that there is not enough on the sword; but water, fire, earth, air and everything must fight against such righteous people, and "condemn innocent blood", since they think they are doing God a service by it. So nothing rhymes their chair with God's law and teachings. These are the heretics and false teachers of whom we have said above 16). But as the tyrants received their reward, so these will not escape their judgment, as will follow.

V. 22. But the LORD is my protection, my God is the refuge of my confidence.

They teach, rage, strangle as they wish, but I am safe from them and mightily defended, for God is my protection. Our doctrine must remain, their denial must perish, for God is our protection; thus we shall remain safe from them, whether here or there. For our God is our refuge, on which we defy and are safe. But judge this alone, but he will also destroy them as a God of vengeance, as follows:

V.23. And he will repay them for their wrongdoing, and will disturb them in their wickedness; the LORD our God will disturb them.

(41) There stands the final, certain judgment that God will not leave their wickedness unscented, but will disturb them all in their wickedness, so that their wickedness must cease. And this will be done by "our God," that is, by the word of God, whom they do not consider to be a god, and think that God is on their side, as we have heard above [§§ 16. 40]. He who believes this, and is taught by God, can be patient, let the wicked rage, and look to the end, and endure the time.

1) Erlanger: Judging.

The 109th Psalm.

To sing a psalm of David on high. 2)

What the "singing up" is, is said above [Ps. 62, § 1]. David made the psalm in the spirit of Christ, who speaks the whole psalm in his own person against Judah the betrayer and against all Judaism, and proclaims what will happen to them. So St. Peter also leads this Psalm Apost. 1, 16. ff. about Judah, where they are

Not that he speaks of Judah alone, but, as St. Peter says there, v. 16, Judah was the head or most important thing that Christ was captured and martyred, and Christ himself confessed before Pilate that Judah had committed the greatest sin by handing him over.

2 Therefore the psalm is primarily against Judah, but also against all who are with Judah, and who continue and follow in his work; as Christ himself indicates here in the psalm, saying, "So must it be with all who oppose me," so that this psalm starts from Judah and goes over all who have Judah's way about them, as there are all persecutors and mobs against Judah.

2) Immediately after these words, in the old edition of Walch, the text of the whole psalm is printed, which differs only in a few variants from the one printed in the first scripture of the fourth volume. Because it is not found in the editions here either, we leave it out.

Christ's word. For they all blaspheme the truth, and persecute the true Christians. This is a terrible psalm against them. For it curses and proclaims so much evil to the enemies of Christ that some have spread the rumor that the monks and nuns should pray it against their enemies, and if it were prayed against anyone, he would have to die; but these are lies and fairy tales.

Why then does Christ curse so badly, who nevertheless dents and teaches, Matth. 5, 44, that one should not curse, and he himself also did not curse on the cross, as St. Peter [1. Ep. 2, 23] speaks, but prays for his cursers and blasphemers? [Luc. 23, 34.], as I asked above [Ps. 94, § 6] also of vengeance. Recently the answer is: Love does not curse, nor does it avenge; but faith curses and avenges. To understand this, you must separate God from men, persons from things. As for God and things, there is neither patience nor blessing, but zeal, anger, vengeance and cursing. When the wicked persecute the gospel, that affects God and His cause, there is neither blessing nor happiness to be wished, otherwise no one would have to preach or write, even against heresy, since this cannot happen without cursing. For he who preaches against it wishes it to perish, and does the worst and best 1) for it to perish.

4 This is what I call curses of faith. For before faith would let God's word perish and heresy stand, it would rather that all creatures perish. 2) For through heresy one loses God Himself. Thus the cursing of Christ in this psalm is not for his own sake, but for the sake of his office and his word, that the Jews should confirm their error, and that they should perish from the gospel, and have no happiness with their Judaism; just as Moses, 4th book, chap. 16, 15, prays that God should not hear Korah's prayer, nor accept their sacrifice. Therefore it must be cursed, wished evil and asked vengeance, against the Evan-

geli persecution and error, and against those who do and cause such misfortune.

(5) But the person shall not avenge himself, but shall suffer all things, and do good even to his enemy, according to the doctrine of Christ and the kindness of love. For love, not faith, rules here, and concerns me, not faith. Likewise, a Christian may be a judge and condemn and kill the murderer, but not for his own sake, nor to seek his own in it, but for the sake of others, and ex officio. This is as much as if God himself had done it, for his order does it. Summa, to curse for the sake of God's word is right, but for your sake, or to avenge yourself, or to seek your own, is wrong.

6th And in such cursing it is good to call God's name, and to curse by God, even as one sweareth and blesseth by his name. Thus it is written in 2 Kings 2:24 that Elisha cursed the children of Bethel in the name of the Lord, because they tore the bears apart; and Zech. 3:2, the angel curses thus, "The Lord punish thee, Satan"; and Paul, Acts 23:3, "The Lord punish thee, Satan. 23, 3: "The LORD smite thee, thou whitewashed wall" 2c. Does he now speak thus:

V. 1. God of my praise, do not be silent.

Mostly he complains in this psalm about the mouths of the wicked, who always attack and condemn the doctrine of God, so that they gain cause to kill the same teachers as if they were doing right; and the quarrel is entirely for the sake of the doctrine. Therefore I also said that in this psalm it is the faith and the cause that curses, and not the love or the person. This is also what he means by saying, "God my praise," as if to say, "You see that they all revile, blaspheme and condemn me because of your word, but I have no one to praise me but you with yours. Therefore do not be silent, that is, praise, exalt, glorify, defend me, and prove that I teach rightly. Just as Christ [John 17:1] says to the Father, "Transfigure me, that your Son may transfigure you"; give the Spirit, perform miracles and signs, so that my teaching may be confirmed; so transfigure me.

1) Erlanger: "Böste" (that is, most evil), which is perhaps the correct reading.

2) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Erlangers. Jenaer: rntergingen.

3) Wittenberg and Erlangen: the same.

I then preach to you that you are true God and my Father; so they believe me and are both glorified.

8. "God of my praise," though in Latin and German it reads, as, I praise God; yet in Hebrew it is said as much as: God praises me; or, I have no one to praise me but God; just as that, Ps. 89:27, "God of my salvation," does not mean that I help God, but that He helps me; and "God of my righteousness," Ps. 4:2, does not mean that I make God righteous, or help me to be right, but that He helps me to be right and to keep right. So here also, "God of my praise," that is, God holds above my praise, He glorifies and honors me, because for His sake I must be darkened, blasphemed and defiled.

V. 2 For the false mouths of the wicked have opened against me, and speak lies against me.

(9) That is, as it is said [§7], they lie and blaspheme me shamefully and falsely, that my doctrine, thy word, must be error, heretical, seditious, and condemned. Therefore do not be silent, and praise me against their reproach and reviling. This is what must happen to all preachers of the gospel.

V. 3: They talk to me with hateful words everywhere, and fight against me without a cause.

(10) That is, their venom is spreading far and wide, eating away at them like a crab, as Paul says [2 Tim. 3:13], "that they deceive much," and with such hateful words they make me hostile and worthless before everyone, fighting altogether against me without any cause. For I teach the truth, because of which they should fall more cheaply to me and assist me, so they fight against me.

V. 4. For loving them, they are against me; but I pray.

(11) "Without cause" (I say), for I show them much love by telling them the truth. But for love I must receive hatred and hateful words and slander. But what should I do in such a case? I pray. St. Paul also teaches Phil. 4:6: "In all things let your prayer be made known before God with supplication and thanksgiving." As

he should say, "What is to be done? You cannot suffer charity; well, then you must command God, and keep to prayer. Oh, what a pious child is the world! It does not want evil, it cannot stand good. What does it want, then? Hellish fire and the devil with it; that is what she will encounter.

V. 5 They do me evil for good, and hate for love.

(12) Beloved, behold how near he speaks to our Lord God, and how mightily he prays. They have no cause (he says) to fight against me; if I teach the truth, you know that, they have much less cause to do me evil. For if I do them good, they hate me. So that both my right doctrine and good works and miracles are hated and persecuted by them. What more shall I do? What is left but that they are worthy to lose both my word and my work? That is that they are cursed, for they want neither blessing nor good. Now it may not be otherwise. For he who does not want good must have evil. He who does not want to be blessed must be cursed, as follows:

V. 6. Set the wicked over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand.

(13) I have not read in all Scripture more terrible, more horrible curses and calamities than these two verses, which alone should reasonably terrify, and make all the world narrow to all who persecute and dispute the word of God.

14 For here he says, "Set the wicked over them." This setting is called "Pakad" in Hebrew.

[XXX], that is, appoint and order to the office, as one appoints bishops, pastors, preachers, or also secular lords and officials. So here the opinion is: Because they do not like me and my doctrine badly, and want to have it so, so let go, let false teachers, red spirits and vain godless preachers come among them, who teach them vain lies, godless doctrine and error, and lead them from one error into another; so they want it.

15. for this "Satan stand at their right hand",

That is, the devil, through his apostles, is riding them in such a way that even if they would like to come out, and almost mean well, and pretend to want to know Mr. Right, 1) and would like to know right and truth, the devil is there, disguising himself as an angel of light [2 Cor. 11:14], and hinders them, and stops them with such appearances and beautiful thoughts and words, and entices and blinds them, so that they cannot come out, even though the truth is presented to them so brightly and thinly that they would like to grasp it.

(16) This is the punishment we see in the Jews today, that they do not depart from their mind, though they know that they are overcome with the Scriptures. Who does it? Not reason, nor human blindness (for that would be to control), but, as it says here, Satan is at their right hand. This is what all heretics have done; this is what our red spirits are doing now over the sacrament; this is also what the papacy is doing.

(17) But he speaks as of one, and not of many, though he hath hitherto complained of many. For it is chiefly about Judah the traitor, who (as it is said [§ 1]) led the multitude against Christ, as the centurion; but to all who are of his kind the same thing is contrary. Since he did not like to hear Christ, he had to hear the ungodly chief priests, and even though he repented afterwards and stood as if he wanted to go right, he did not come back, but despaired. For Satan stood stiffly at his right hand, and kept him. Paul also speaks of such punishment in 2 Thess. 2, 11, that God sends strong error to those who have not accepted the truth and must believe the lie. And Christ Joh. 5, 43: "I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. Another shall come in his name, and the same shall ye receive." The same thing is happening now in Germany, and it will become even more so.

V. 7. When he is judged, he must go out condemned, and his prayer must be sin.

O fear and humble all the world before God's word! How horrible it is

that! All his life (he says), which he leads in the most holy way, and does not mean otherwise, because he leads it according to God's word, in the very best way, that must be condemned and be an unchristian, devilish life before God. What is the use of such a great, strict, hard life, so much fasting, discipline and such fine works?

19. for this, he says, "when he prays to God" (which they do almost strongly), it is not only unheard, but also sin that they are condemned even more by their prayer; as Christ also forewarns the hypocrites who pray for a long time.

20 The word, "when he is judged," is said of the judgment that comes through teaching and preaching, if one follows it with the work. For in the previous verse he speaks of the preaching ministry. Therefore this judgment is nothing else than the law or teaching, in which evil is judged and punished, and right living is preached. Thus the 122nd Psalm, v. 5, speaks of the preaching office in Jerusalem: "There sit the chairs of judgment"; and Isa. 9, 7, also Jer. 23, 5, say that Christ should rule with judgment and justice. In sum, judgment or righteousness is the doctrine by which consciences are to be judged and live, to avoid evil and to do good.

(21) These ungodly men, then, are so troubled that they bring judgment and justice, that is, they have them preach and counsel, and punish evil, and think it is so right; they go out, do so, and bring it to pass; but know not that all this is condemned, which they think is a good thing, and that they deserve heaven by it. For the wicked have truly established their nature in the ius regiment, punishing evil and praising good, and walk in judgment and law, just as the Jews have their Talmud, we Christians have spiritual law, the Turks have the Alkoran; and yet everything is damned, a devilish thing.

V. 8: His days must become few, and his office must be received by another.

22 This verse is quoted by St. Peter Apost. 1, 20, where he says: "His episcopate must be taken by another", and interprets it to mean that St. Matthias came in Judah's place. And it is true, without the Greek word "episcopate", and now German "Bisthum", seldom used.

1) That is, as if they wanted to drive correctly. Cf. 817.

We see such bishops and bishoprics, of which neither Judas nor St. Peter saw any. For episcopus or bishop really means nothing else than an officer, and bishopric an office; and here it is like the word which is said above [v. 6], "Set ungodly men over them." In short, it is called office and ministers, for they are to be Christ's ministers, and to execute his command, that is, they are to preach and help preach. How the bishops do this now is evident. For this reason they have also lost their office, and others have taken their place, as Matthias took Judah's place, for they have become Judas.

023 Then shall he say, Judas and his people the Jews ought to have the apostleship, and to preach the gospel; but they will not: therefore shall Matthias come in Judah's stead, and the Gentiles in the Jews' stead, and preach the gospel which they should preach, and which was promised unto them. Therefore, because the bishops do not preach, and follow the pope, their Judas, let others come who are not bishops, and lead their ministry and preach.

24 This is that he says, "His days must be few," that is, he shall not last long. This was also bodily true of Judah and the Jews. For Judah soon fell away; so also the Jews were soon after cast out by the Romans. And now follows how the Jews, Judah's people, should fare. For, as [§§1. 2] said, he speaks especially of the Jews, although it also applies to all godless teachers in his way.

V. 9: His children must become orphans, and his wife a widow.

(25) That is, the children and wives of the people of the Jews 1) shall be so: as it came to pass, when their husbands were slain by the Romans in the spoiling of Jerusalem.

V. 10. His children must be unstable, begging and seeking, because their dwelling is desolate.

(26) All the plagues, spiritual and corporal, he tells about the Jews. For the people

We see before our eyes that they are unstable in the time of their destruction, are driven out here and there, and have nowhere safe to sit, and must beg everywhere, not for bread, but for a dwelling in the land. For they must seek a dwelling in every place, because their dwelling is in the Jewish land, and they have no land of their own, no city, no village, and no government. And yet this verse should move the Jews, because they see that they alone, and no nation under the sun, shall be so. For there is no nation that has its own villages, towns and country, without the Jews alone, who are everywhere, have nowhere of their own, land, town or village, are all the time uncertain guests and beggars.

V. 11. Let the usurer suck up all that he has, and let strangers rob his labor.

27) It should be contrary, because this verse says, 2) because the Jews, famous usurers, suck everyone dry where they are. But the Psalm wants to say so much, that they shall have no happiness, but vain misfortune in body, soul, children, 3) property and honor. For though they almost usury, yet a greater usurer than they cometh, and taketh it from them; as the other part saith, "that strangers rob their labor. For it so happens to the Jews that when they have been gathering for a long time, an accident comes that they are driven out, robbed, punished, and what they have is taken from them; as they well know and complain daily.

V. 12: And there must be no one to show him kindness, and no one to have mercy on his orphans.

28 O Lord God, this is all too true! The Jews are thought to be dogs, and he who harms them or makes fun of them is thought to have done well. Because they and their children do not want to accept Christ, there is no mercy for the stubborn people. Nor do they suffer it; so firmly does Satan stand at their right hand, and they hope in vain for a better.

2) The meaning is: One should probably assume that it happened just the opposite way than this verse says 2c.

3) In the issues: Children.

V. 13. His descendants must be cut off, their name must perish in One Limb.

29 Here he comes again to many, and says, "Their name," not, his name; that we may see how he speaks of a whole people. This is all fulfilled sint of the disturbance Jerusalem. For since that time no Jewish man has come who is respected in Christendom and before God, but with the apostles, who were the last to keep a name, their memory and name is gone, when before they had so many fathers and prophets, whose name is not silent to this day, but their teaching and life is praised in all the world. But they have had none of these since time immemorial, and thus in the memory of man 1) all their name and honor are gone.

(30) For that they should all be cut off in the flesh, and have no remembrance among themselves, would be contrary to the verses above, that their descendants should beg and suffer misery. If this is to be, then they must have descendants; but with God and God's people they are no longer valid, as their forefathers and prophets were; they are waiting for a prophet who is to be valid, but nothing will come of it. This verse says that it was over with them in the time of the apostles.

V. 14: Let his father's iniquity be remembered before the Lord, and let not his mother's sin be blotted out.

31. his (that is, this people, the Jews), and is of the opinion that it should be said in all the world, as St. Stephen Apost. 7, 51 to the Jews: "You have always resisted the Holy Spirit, as your fathers did, so also you." For so it is said: As the fathers and mothers of the Jews, that is, their ancestors, have always disobeyed the prophets, so are their children now. For they do not believe the same prophets that their fathers did not believe; it is the same unbelief. If their fathers had believed, they would not have strangled the prophets; if the Jews now believed the same prophets, they would accept Christ. But

1) That is, at the same time as the apostles.

They remain in their fathers' sin; so God does not forget them, and punishes them as long as they sin.

I would like to know what the Jews could say about this psalm. They must ever confess that the Scripture speaks of them, as St. Paul says Rom. 3, 19. All verses force them to do so, that it 2) speaks of a Jewish man, who suffers such things among the Jews and curses, he is David, or whom they want. So the experience agrees with the text, that over no people such curses go under the sun, but over them, probably fifteen hundred years. This did not happen to David's enemies, but to JEsu Christ's enemies, the Jews, it happened just as it says here; there is no getting around it. But, as it is said [§ 16], reason would have overcome; Satan stands at the right hand, and does not let them understand.

V. 15. They must be before the Lord forever, and their memory must be blotted out from the earth.

That is, the same sin of their ancestors, of which it is said, 31 is always before the Lord. For they also do not leave it, so God cannot hear their prayer, nor accept their works. Therefore "they also always remain before the Lord," that is, they always stir up their fathers' sin anew through their hardened heart, because they always persist, and thus always remain condemned Jews, as he has painted them above 2 ff]. has painted them.

34] "Their memory also shall be cut off from the earth," not that they should not be known, but that they should no longer be remembered in sermons and examples, as their fathers and prophets were remembered; as the sixteenth Psalm, v. 4, says: "I will remember them no more in my mouth. For "remembrance" in Scripture does not mean to remember (otherwise Judas, Pilate, Herod would always be remembered), but to praise and extol him, and to have a good report of him; all which is not done to Judah and the Jews, but they are always reproached, from the time they were destroyed by the Romans. All these things are of the Jews in particular.

2) namely: the writing here.

who sinned against Christ himself and have children and descendants. But the heretics, the sects and the priesthood, who do not have children, also have their plague, that they finally perish, and their memory is eradicated, so that they are no longer valid; as is now happening to the priesthood, of which enough has otherwise been said.

V.16. Because he did not think to show mercy, but persecuted the wretched and the poor, and the sorrowful of heart, that he might kill him.

35. above, in the other Psalm fPs. 62, 4. It is also said of those who tread down a sloping wall and a broken fence; which he interprets here with clear words, and says that it is such a wicked trick that they take on a wretched, poor, and otherwise sufficiently distressed person, whom they should help out and comfort cheaply, and, as he says here, prove benevolence; so they do the very worst to him and only help him to death, yet they want to have done God a service by it.

Just as in our times, our angry princes and bishops and learned hypocrites leave the Turks and their kind in peace, no matter how great heretics and seducers they are considered among them; the wall stands too firm, and the fence resists. But where there is a poor citizen, or a wretched priest and preacher, who has hardly enough bread and suffers all hardships, the great, angry princes and bishops take care of him; he must suffer, then they have found a hanging wall and a bent fence, then they become knights here on earth, and deserve heaven for it. Here the lion has caught a mouse, and makes himself think that he has overcome the lindworm. Germany is now full of such Abels and Junkers, who pestilence and St. Vitus' dances in the alehouses, 1) and can only plunge the knife against poor, miserable, defenseless people; then they are of the nobility. Fie, what unholy people, yes, sows and wild beasts, are we Germans, that there is no noble thought or courage in us, even after the world!

37. Now God (he says here) will not forget them again. For he has distinguished their wickedness, and even though they are considered pious and righteous people in the eyes of the world, he still considers them murderers and evil-doers. For here you see what he accuses them of, and what names and things he ascribes to them. First of all, that they do not think to do good to the poor and miserable, that is, they are unmerciful, even to the miserable; therefore they must perish without all mercy, even when they come to distress and misery, that they may be measured as they have measured.

38 Secondly, that they are not only merciless, but also persecute the same wretched people to death. It is sinful beyond measure to persecute and strangle the wretched, whom the wild beasts and unreasonable creatures gladly help. But who believes that they are considered such by God, and that such terrible judgments hover over their heads and loom all hours? Spiritual eyes must be closed until experience comes, as happened to the Jews.

V.17. And he loved the curse, and it shall come upon him: and if he would not have the blessing, it shall come far enough from him.

(39) That is, he wished to be cursed and maligned, and cursed himself; so great was his delight in his cursing. It is not that they love public cursing, but the Holy Spirit shows by the words their horrible, miserable blindness and obduracy, that they take for blessing that which is the worst curse, and again, for cursing that which is the noblest blessing. As when the Jews cried out about Christ before Pilato: "His blood come upon us and our children" (Matth. 27, 25.). I think this is a curse that still weighs hard enough on them. Nevertheless, they considered it the best blessing. For they thought: Oh, that we should kill this wicked man is well done in the sight of God; we will dare to do what we are urged to do, knowing full well that a blessing will come upon us in return. Therefore, let his blood be freshly poured out upon us.

040 So neither would they have the blessing, since they denied him, to be king.

1) that is, m anwüschten curses pestilence and St. Vitus dance.

and said: "We have no king, without the emperor" [Joh. 19, 15.]. As if they should say: The devil has this king! it would be vain cursing and misfortune 2c.

41 The papacy is now doing the same with its own. They have become enemies of the gospel and have condemned it; what they are threatened with, they consider a blessing. Yes, they say, the devil desires your gospel, and God protects me from your prayer; but I will dare and wait for your urging 2c. If such people have no other misfortune, don't you think it is misfortune enough to have such a stubborn, blinded, hardened heart, which neither sees nor hears, and does not allow itself to be told bad things, and thinks that it walks in blessings and not in curses, and shuns the blessings as a curse? O Lord God, let us do other sins than those which we ought to sin.

V. 18. and put on the curse like his shirt, and it went into his inward parts like water, and like oil into his bones.

(42) Here he shows how deep such hardening is in their hearts, and how firm it is that they cannot be converted. All preaching, exhorting, warning, singing and saying is lost. And he illustrates this with three different similes. First, with the "shirt" or garment. Just as a man cannot be without a shirt, or without the next garment on his body, for one should not go naked, so that his garment must be on his neck every day: so also the Jews are attached to the hardening, that they love the curse; there is no counsel, they cannot be without such hardening, is also their daily exercise, just as a daily garment is attached to the body. Nevertheless they think it is right for them, and they do well by it; just as a man's garment is right for him, and he does well to wear it, and does wrong to go naked without it. So the Jews also think they are doing a shameful thing when they take off their stiffening.

43) Secondly, when a man drinks water or anything else (for by "water" the Hebrew language understands all kinds of drink, and by bread all kinds of food), and has now come so far into it that [it] is digested and

has become flesh and blood, who will bring it out again? No bath, sweat or medicine will help; it has become nature, and, as he says here, "has come into his innermost being"; it must remain inside, and go with him, and he with him, to hell, into eternal fire. So it is also with the Jews; their hardening has come so far into them that it has become their nature, and now they can never do otherwise. They still think it is a good thing, yes, it is a pure refreshment and noble drink that restores them. Quench their thirst, nourish them well. For they drink and water themselves daily with it, and sustain themselves with it, just as a man refreshes, cools, quenches and sustains himself daily with drink. For they teach and hear such curses with pleasure and great desire, as a thirsty man drinks with great desire. This is what I mean by loving the curse.

44 Third, he speaks here of "oil," that is, of good oil or balsam to anoint oneself with; as the nature of tree oil is that it is very useful to the body, making straight, strong, healthy, beautiful and dexterous limbs. Therefore the fighters use to anoint their bodies with oil. Now if a man smears himself with oils or ointments, and brings it so far that it goes through the bone and marrow, as the good ointments do after their kind, who will bring it out again? It is hard to get it out of clothes, and no amount of washing or wiping or sweeping will help; you would have to melt the bone and marrow together with the ointment and still not get it out. So the curse and hardening of the Jews has gone so completely through heart, courage and mind, driven through marrow and bone, that there is no help nor advice, but they must be melted in hell, and yet they are not swept away or cleansed. Nevertheless, they think that it is a delicious ointment, and that such teaching is as healthy for them as oil is for the body, and they think that they will become strong, fine, beautiful, pleasant and shining before God with it, as oil makes the body before people, and they always smear themselves with it the longer the more.

45 We can see this in the daily experience of the Jews, how stiff and obdurate they are from child to child; so poisonous and ugly can they speak of Christ that

[it is beyond all measure. For they think that what we believe and teach about Christ is a vile curse and poison, and that Christ was a bad man who was crucified with other bad men because of his wickedness. Therefore, when they call him, they shamefully call him Thola, that is, the hanged man. For because they believe that Jesus was a knave, it cannot be otherwise, they must consider us Christians to be the very most foolish, obscene people under the sun, because reason here must say that if a murderer were beheaded today, and in the morning some people came and worshipped him, and considered him to be a true God, that would be much more foolish than someone worshipping a block or stone; and could not be more foolish.

46 To this be added that we Christians also are wicked, and give wicked examples. So they are hardened and angered everywhere, that such a curse must go through their bones and marrow, and poison them so deeply that they cannot come out and take the crucified Jesus for a Lord and God. And so it remains a ridiculous thing with them that we Christians worship a wicked and damned Jew, as if we worshiped Cain or Absalom for gods. There they are, the oil has gone into their bones, they digest the water without stopping. O a terrible judgment and example of divine wrath!

V. 19: Let it be to him as a garment to put on, and as a girdle to gird himself with.

47 That is, let it be done to him as he wills, and let the curse, which he wants to have, cling to him, and let him consider the gospel a poison and a curse, and Christ a knave; so that he is and remains obdurate, so that God removes his hand, and does not give his Spirit and word among them, so that they may be converted; as he also prophesies Isa. 5:6, "I will command my clouds not to rain upon them.

(48) Not that no Jew should ever come to faith, for there are still some fragments to be left, and some individuals to be converted; but Judaism,

1) Taken by us from Walch's old edition. In the other editions: in the morning.

which we call the Jewish people, is not converted. Neither is the gospel preached among them, so that the Holy Spirit may find room among them; but where they are together, and their synagogues are, they remain with their curse and poison, so that they must curse Christ, and take their poison for salvation, and curse for blessing. Nevertheless, in the lines, some of the multitude jump off one by one, so that God may nevertheless remain God of the seed of Abraham and not cast them out altogether; as St. Paul says Rom. 11:1, 2.

49 And here thou seest that he speaketh of the daily "garment" and "girdle," not of the garment that lieth in the coffer, or of the girdle that lieth in the ark, but which he weareth and putteth on daily; signifying the hardened mind, from which they never depart, and the hardened curse, that they go about daily, and do not cease, and think that it is well with them.

V. 20. So be it done to them of the Lord that are against me, and speak evil against my soul.

50 The prayer in this psalm is answered, and will be so to all the enemies of Christ, especially to the Jews, whom he especially means, and proves the work in public experience. For it is all about the word or speech that they teach against Christ, curse, condemn and blaspheme him, and would gladly have him under them. That is, "They speak evil against my soul," that is, against my life; they would gladly have me die and perish, so hard are they against me. But the God of his praise is not silent, praises and exalts him, the more they curse and condemn him.

(51) And here we may all fear, especially all heretics and false teachers. For what Christ asks here also applies to them. Wherever the accident occurs, that one lacks Christ's opinion in one piece, and teaches his own opinion, then all is lost, and the whole Christ is lost; as he himself says Matth. 5:18, 19: "Whoever breaks one of the least commandments, and teaches men so, he also shall be the least in heaven. For not one jot or tittle shall perish" 2c.

After that, one falls on it, and such sense, like water, goes into the innermost,

and like oil through bone and marrow, and the daily garment is made of it. Then one part curses the other, and each part's doctrine is a poison and a curse to the other part, and its own doctrine is a blessing and a salvation; as we see now also in our sects and papists. Here then it is lost. The multitude does not convert; some and a few, whom God saves, get right again, the others remain in their curse and poison, like the Jews, and think it a delicious thing.

(53) This is what he says here, how all the enemies of Christ love the 1) curse and hate the blessing, in which they also remain. This is why St. Paul speaks of Titus 3:10, 11, that one should shun the red man, after two admonitions, because he is a sinner. I have also never read that the teachers of heresy are converted; they remain stubborn in their conceit, the oil has passed through marrow and bone, and their water has become flesh and blood, completely their nature, they do not allow them to say nor refuse. This is the sin in the Holy Spirit that has no forgiveness. For it also has no repentance nor contrition, but defense and excuse, as if it were a holy, precious thing, and the true gospel that teaches against it is a devil's thing.

V. 21. But you, O Lord, do to me for your name's sake, for your goodness is lovely; save me.

Here he turns back to God and also prays for his cause to be promoted and to prevail. For it must be both that the wicked will finally be defeated and the righteous will win. But he says that his cause is not his, but God's own. For this makes a meager and joyful heart before God, to plead for oneself against the ungodly, when one is certain that we act and suffer for the sake of God's word and work, and do not seek ourselves. Therefore he says, "Do thou in me for thy name's sake"; that is, you see that the matter concerns you; your name, your word, your honor I praise, so they blaspheme all this. If thou forbear me, then thou shalt also bear thy name: but this is impossible. What

But shall he do to him? The loving kindness, the kind benefit, that he may save him; as follows: "And save me." For salvation is sweet and pleasant to those who are in distress and anguish, as he says:

V. 22. For I am wretched and poor; my heart is troubled within me.

55 This is well understood from the suffering of Christ, since he was not only outwardly miserable and poor in body, abandoned and persecuted by everyone, but also inwardly afflicted and distressed, and had to hear all blasphemy and abusive words, which almost hurt, even to all devout Christian hearts that hold the truth of God dear.

V.23. I pass away as a shadow flitting, and am cut off like a locust.

(56) To "move like a shadow" is as much as to be inactive, to move to and fro as the wind moves the clouds, so that the shifting has no certain, secure, own place. As Job Cap. 14, 1. 2. says of all human life: "Man lives a little while, and flees like a shadow, and does not remain. To flee does not mean here, as the birds flee; but as David fled from his son Absalom [2 Sam. 15, 30.], and Jacob from his brother-in-law Laban [Gen. 31, 17. ff.], in Hebrew "Barach" [XXX] that so much is said: Man must depart, and from it, he is driven and cannot remain. So Christ also says here that his life in the world is done in such a way that it cannot bear him, chases him and drives him from one place to another, until it even drives him away, as the wind drives the clouds. So it is with the gospel, nowhere is it comfortable, the world weaves and blows until it chases it away with its teachers.

(57) "To be stunned like locusts" is just the same. But it is spoken darkly and obscurely by us, who do not know the animal's "work" or its species. We call it light grasshoppers. However, they are not locusts, but similar to grasshoppers or locusts. It is a common animal in the Orient, and the Parthians and Moors eat it, as well as our locusts and crickets, as the whales eat frogs and snails. St. John the Baptist

1) "den" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Erlanger.

has also eaten the same work, as the evangelists write. But there are such little beasts that have no eyes, but they scratch very much with their wings; therefore they keep together, and fly with great multitudes, without a king; as Solomon says in his Proverbs Cap. 30, 27. 30, 27. And where they fall down, there they devour everything that is green, so that in these countries it is a law of the land to destroy them three times a year with man power. First, when they lay eggs; second, when they have hatched; third, when they have grown up. And it is a special plague from God when they come, like an evil time, pestilence or war; as Egypt was also plagued with it, Ex. 10, 12. ff.

(58) They will be subdued in two ways, first with weapons and manpower, as is now said; and secondly, that a wind will come (of God's order) to take them and throw them into the nearest sea or lake, as happened in Egypt. So Isaiah writes of the king of Assyria, that they shall be shooed and driven away, as the beetle when one rumbles among them. The same Nahum, Cap. 3, 15, also says that the princes of Nineveh shall be chased and scattered like the beasts. It is evident how the prophets used this simile when speaking of a king or person who had been chased out and driven away. Just as we in our country would say of jackdaws or crows when they are driven out of their nests with their young and chased away.

(59) So Christ is saying here that he was driven out, scattered, and scattered, as the work. Which also happened when he was caught, and his disciples left him, and were scattered. As it still happens daily, and has always happened, that when persecution arises against the Christians and God's word, there is a scouring, a chasing, and a breaking up, that this verse may well be called the title of Christ and his Christians. And this Hebrew word "Naar" means to dust out or shake out, as one shakes out or dusts out a coat; and we speak in German thus, we have dusted them out. Therefore the hunting dogs are called stands, which flush out and dust the hares and game, so that the hares rise up and run to the ground.

wipe, here and there, like dust. That is, dispersed and flown away, as the wind scatters the dust, and the dogs, which are called "winds," do also to the wild beasts and hares. Now if Christ had said here, "I will be scattered, as the game is scattered by robbers and winds," it would have been almost easy and light for us Germans.

V. 24 My knees are weak from fasting, and my flesh is lean, having no fat.

That is, they are full and satisfied, but I must suffer hunger and need; as also St. Paul says 1 Cor. 4:11: "We suffer hunger and thirst" 2c. That Christ and his disciples often lacked food, there is no doubt; for he was poor, and the rich gave him nothing. So now he will say, "Why do they persecute me who am so poor, since I have neither money nor goods? Yes, if I were to be fed by them, I would have to die of hunger. Not only do they not feed me, but they also persecute me.

For so it shall be in the world, that the right preachers shall not have bread to eat, but shall suffer all want, miseries, and distresses. But the deceivers shall have enough, even great principality, that this verse may remain true, that Christ must suffer hunger and want. For this verse means nothing, except that Christ and his followers should not be fed in the world, but should also be persecuted, as he will say on the last day: "I was hungry and you did not feed me", Matth. 25, 42.

V. 25. And I was their mockery; when they looked at me, they shook their heads.

The previous verse says how the world does not honor Christ; this one says how it does not honor him either, but mocks and despises him. Summa, the world cannot grant Christ good, honor and life, but poverty, hardship and misery he must bear, shame, scorn and ridicule he must have, pain and death he must suffer, along with all his own. So he wants to say here: What I said or did had to be mocked, they wrinkled their noses, shook their heads and opened their mouths [Ps. 22:8], they thought it was foolishness and nothing. What more could I do? Everything

If I do them good, they do me harm; as he says above [v. 5], "They do me harm for good," I suffer all harm and evil from them, nor do they want mine. Well, let them go. They have no excuse, I have done more than enough to them.

V. 26. Help me, O Lord, my God, help me according to your goodness.

63 Then he concludes the psalm, that God would be with him, and make manifest the wickedness of the Jews and of all his enemies, and his righteousness, that they might be put to shame, and that he might abide in honor; and all this "for his goodness' sake. For hitherto he hath shewed what curses and evils befell him through their hardened and blinded hearts. Now he asks that this be revealed to all the world by divine judgment, so that the shine and glitter that they still have may be removed and become a disgrace in the eyes of all the world, and so that both of them may remain in sin and disgrace, as we see that the wretched Jews are now.

V. 27. That it may be known that this is thy hand, that thou, O Lord, doest these things.

(64) Whether they will not perceive that all these things which thou doest unto me and unto them are thy work, that they may be made manifest before all the world, and that every man may say, Well then, this is the work of God; that the Jews so perish and are destroyed, but Christ so ascendeth upward and increaseth; for the power of men could not have done it.

V. 28. If they curse, bless them. If they rebel, they must be put to shame; but let your servant rejoice.

(65) Let it not be accepted nor helped that they curse me and mine; but the more they curse, the more thou blessest. And if they rebel against me, let them soon be put to shame. I think this verse should be well known to the Jews. Help God, how often and in many lands have they made a play against Christ, and have been burned, strangled and driven away. It is not lacking, if they rebel, then they come into all disgrace,

are miserably burned or driven away. But Christ and His own remain joyful in God, as they are confirmed in their faith.

V. 29. My adversaries must be clothed with shame, and be clothed with their disgrace, as with a garment.

66 There comes again the same thing, above [v. 18. 19.] said about the garment, that a daily hanging is of the curse. But here he speaks of the public shame before the world, which they have full of such a curse. As if he should say: As they put on the curse in the spirit, as a daily garment, so let them also wear a public garment of shame outwardly, so that they may be recognized and despised before all the world for my enemies, that sin and shame are two daily garments: sin before God, and shame before the world. And especially here he calls the skirt, which in Hebrew means the long skirt that goes on the feet. As if to say that they must be ashamed from the crown of their head to their heels.

V. 30. I will diligently give thanks to the Lord with my mouth, and praise him among many.

That is, by such judgment and work you will obtain that people will love and praise you with all their hearts, as you are such a God who takes care of the miserable so fatherly, and does not let them succumb, nor do the wicked lead out their defiance. This is what we say in German: Oh Lord God, who should not praise and glorify you before all the world and in all places, that you so graciously help the poor, and so mightily overthrow and punish the proud, the despisers and the tyrants?

V. 3i. For he is at the right hand of the poor, that he may save his soul from them that judge his soul.

68) This is God's eternal and daily praise, that He takes care of the poor and lowly, and does not celebrate the great men and proud tyrants, as they think, but He helps; indeed, He helps, not only out of random needs, but also from those who live His life.

1) Jenaer: lasset.

judge, condemn and sentence to death, as a heretic and seducer. For this little word "judge" here means those who sit in office and judge, as secular authorities.

69 For it is only free that the worldly authorities will never become completely Christian, but that the greater, greatest, highest part will always persecute Christ, His Word, and His own; as the other Psalm, v. 1, 2, says: "Why do we rage?

the heathen, and the kings of the earth, rebel, and the princes contend with one another against the Lord and his anointed? Here you hear that the virtue of kings and princes is to fight against God and Christ; this they also do. But it also happens to them again that they are porcelain and are overthrown from their seats, one after the other; as the same Psalm and others also report 2c.

10. interpretation of the second psalm. *)

Explained in public lecture from March 1531; printed 1548.

Short preface [Luther's) on the second Psalm.**)

We, who serve the church and have the teaching office upon us, are truly in a very low and bad position, if we compare ourselves with other classes and follow the judgment of the world. For for our toil and labor we generally reap only hatred, and are not only proudly despised, but also bravely starve, while others have plenty and abundance and are held in exceedingly high esteem. We find, however, that for this reason the best minds abandon our studies and follow the professions (*artes*) that are profitable and bring honorable positions. But if you look at the matter in the

If a theologian, however miserable and despised, considers the right way, he is better off (*meliore loco*) than all teachers in other classes. For as often as he performs his office, he not only renders a glorious service to his neighbor, which surpasses all the services of all men, however delicious and useful they may be, but he also offers the most pleasing sacrifice to God in heaven, and is in truth called and is a priest of the Most High. For everything that a theologian does in the church serves to spread the knowledge of God and the blessedness of mankind.

*) This interpretation has been set so far in the year 1532, on the basis of the information of Veit Dietrich (Col. 78): "by v. Martin Luther publicly presented in the year 1532, in the month of March". So also Köstlin, Martin Luther, 3rd ed., vol. II, p. 271, but with the Cautel: "Concerning his lectures we are however not completely clear for this and the next following years [1531 ff.]." However, it will most likely read 1531 instead of 1532, because the year 1532 does not seem permissible to us. In the interpretation itself Luther says (Lrl. opp., Dom. XVIII, p. 84): "Zwingli and Carlstadt are now causing riots.... Therefore I have no doubt that they will also suffer punishment for this ungodliness and finally learn with their great harm that Christ reigns." These words show irrefutably that Zwingli was still alive at the time. He fell in the battle of Kappel on October 1, 1531. That Luther already had news of Zwingli's death in 1531, we see from his letter to Amsdorf of December 28, 1531 (De Wette, Vol. IV, p. 322). In May of the same year (1531) Carlstadt had arrived in Switzerland (Waleb, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XX, Introduction, p. 28). Since Luther mentions Carlstadt together with Zwingli in the words quoted, we assume that these lectures in the year 1531

**In the Latin editions, a Latin translation of the second Psalm by Luther precedes this preface.

Since rmn by the grace of God the abominations of the godless sacrifice of the papists, namely the masses, are done away with, which alone (solus) the godless pope with his teachers adorned with the name of a sacrifice, and since now the right worship is restored, namely the preaching of the word of God, by which GOD is rightly known and adorned, then I too, as one of the number of the priests of GOD, have wanted to take the second Psalm into my hands and interpret it, not only to teach you and learn for myself, but also so that I may offer a pleasing sacrifice to GOD. For why should I not call this work, which I take upon myself for the sake of the Church of Christ, and which is directed entirely to the glory of God and the blessedness of men, and which is commanded us in the second and third commandments? For how can we use God's name in a more holy way than when we instruct ourselves and others with the word of God? How can we better spend time and better sanctify the holiday than by

By alleviating the unavoidable and exceedingly severe hardships at this miserable time through the comforts of Scripture?

Let us, therefore, put our effort and work together, and let us, you with hearing, I with teaching, as our profession entails, render to God this service which He requires of us everywhere, so that through this action of the Word of God both faith may be strengthened in ourselves and the glory of God may be spread. This is a sacrifice pleasing and acceptable to God. In these "farrows of the lips," as the prophet [Hosea, Cap. 14, 3.] speaks, He delights more than in all works, no matter how much they cost and how difficult they are. Therefore it behooves us to approach this work, which is so holy, so necessary and useful, with a joyful heart. For we are sure that while we are doing this, we are not only not sinning, but we are also engaged in the most holy works, which will bear a certain fruit, and an eternal fruit at that.

around the time given by Dietrich, which is confirmed by the first words of the interpretation of the 51st Psalm (according to the reading of the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers): Pinarravimu8 proximo vore p8alUaum gtzeunäunn. The Erlanger has instead of: proximo V6l'6 only: proximk. Veit Dietrich rewrote the same and published them in 1546 under the title: Xarratio ?8a1nai 860uncii, n Ueveroncio D. Martino Initier", clietn, et eoUeetn n Vito Itioeöorn Xoriber^". Xarratio Oap. noni Ü8aiaae a. O. Martine" ttutkero cketata, et a 4oianno kVedero oolieeta. (6um praek. Viti Diieeöori aU Oeor^". Vogler, et 4o. I'reäeri nck Xiooi. ^".M8äortuurn, lipmcoquin ^uinderge8em.) ^Vitekergue per 4c "Uanrmn OutU. 1546. octav. In Dietrich's letter to Georg Vogler there is a very important passage, which we therefore place here: "With this intention of preserving the right doctrine and also to propagate it to the descendants] I have published many interpretations of Martin Luther. So that no one doubts the fidelity (üao) of these, he should know that those which have been published by me in the printing houses of the Wittenberg University up to this year 1546, have all been read over and improved by the author himself. And because, God willing, I will continue to publish several more of his works (monumenta), I will prove the fidelity that I owe, and will not take care of these editions alone, but will take the learned and honest men Caspar Cruciger and Georg Röer along with me, so that they may give their expert opinion (een8yre8) and testimony about them. For to these men is known what his opinion was in all articles of doctrine, and their fidelity and earnestness is so great that they do not want Luther's speeches to be recited by me in such a way as Plato recounts that of Socrates, or as he recounts in the Xtiantioo the narrative of the Egyptian priest." A single edition of the second psalm organized Joh. Jakob Rambach at Halle in 1728 under the title: Martini Outiieri cornin6ntariu8 8uoouienti88iinu8 in p8g.iinnin 8eonncnm in U8nin eoruin, oni saori8 Utterm opsrantur, 86parmtiin 6(1itn8. Euro aniinnctwrmoniinn ot prooomio äo iatina Ontderi clio tiono. Octav. A German translation of this text appeared in Magdeburg in 1550 in quarto under the title: "Der ander Psalm Davids durch D. Martin Luther, in which he so masterfully responds to the scandals and trades of the world's scholars of the present time, and presents such rich consolation, teaching and instruction to the poor, afflicted Christians, as if the Holy Spirit had especially pointed his fingers to these times and days. In the Gesamtansgaben, this interpretation is found in Latin: in the Wittenberg (1549), Tom. III, toi. 4374," with Dietrich's attribution to Vogler; in the Jena one (1603), Norm. IV, toi. 734, without the same, and in the Erlangen exeZ. opp., Dom. XVIII, p. 1, with the aforementioned attribution. The old translation is printed in the Altenburger, vol. V, p. 1134; in the Leipziger, vol. VI, p. 1 and in Walch, vol. V, Col. 104. We have retranslated according to the Erlanger, comparing the Wittenberger and the Jenaer. Like Walch, we have omitted the letter to Vogler, because only the passage given above is of importance to us.

Interpretation of the second Psalm,

publicly recited by Martin Luther in 1531,*) in the month of March.

This second Psalm, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles [Cap. 4, 25. ff.], served to offer God the first prayer and the first thanksgiving in the Church of the New Testament. For when the disciples were gathered together, they sang and praised God, asking that in such great dangers and such great rages of the adversaries, their hearts might be strengthened and the word preached with all joy. This passage proves sufficiently that this psalm contains something especially excellent, since the apostles, who had just been filled with the Holy Spirit and were facing the first challenge or the first severe affliction (paroxysm), take hold of it by praying it, and in this way both comfort themselves and fortify themselves against all violence of the enemies. Both of these things are also very necessary for us in these last times, since we are attacked by the devil and the world with violence and cunning, as well as with all kinds of adversity and every kind of misfortune for the sake of God's word.

But it is a prophetic psalm, in which we also should praise God and pray with the apostles against the rage of the world, and certainly we should receive consolation with the apostles, which he holds out to us in abundance and emphasizes with good words and sayings. For this is what David does in this psalm, that he comforts and teaches the church about the kingdom of Christ, how it should be spread, even if the powers in the world and in the air [Eph. 2:2] do not want to allow it. Therefore it serves primarily to confirm the article about the new testament or the kingdom of Christ, that it will be a spiritual kingdom, that Christ is an eternal king who will have no successor, that he is also a priest who teaches the church; yes, that he is God by nature and brings eternal righteousness and wisdom to us.

Since this is explained in detail, it is full of comfort, and yet the prophet shows that this kingdom will be so weak in outward appearance that one would like to think that it would fall away at any moment. For it does not have any foundation or strength that can be seen, as is the case with the empires of the world, which rely on their power, wealth, large number of people and the great extent of their territory. This empire lacks all this protection; without any foundation it hangs on the mere word, like a drop of water on a bucket.

This is approximately the content of this psalm. Therefore, it is useful to teach the church, so that we may learn all the circumstances of this kingdom: what kind of king Christ is, when, where, and how he will rule his kingdom, what is consistent with this kingdom, what is contrary to it, what are the fruits or effects of this kingdom, what is its appearance before the world, what is before God and in the spirit; those who know these things have a certain and right idea of this kingdom. Then it also serves us for consolation. For we are reminded in advance that the devil and the betters will set themselves against this kingdom, and all that is high in the betters, whether through the delusion of holiness or a peculiar wisdom: all these, the prophet prophesies, will set themselves against this kingdom with common counsel.

But, you will say, this frightens more than it should comfort. Not at all. For this is also added, that both the devil and the world with all their powers and all their might 1) will do nothing else than to make God laugh and finally provoke such great indignation that all those who oppose this kingdom must perish. That one knows this is useful-

1) Jenaer and Erlanger: orünixotkutiu instead of: oinnj potdntiu.

*) In the original "1532". Because of our change, compare the first note to this writing.

It is a comforting and consoling message, and serves to give us the right idea of this kingdom, so that we do not lose heart and become despondent when we are misled by these aversions that attack this kingdom. In our time, the gospel first had great success, for everyone hoped for the same thing that the apostles hoped for before they were taught about this kingdom by the Holy Spirit, namely, that this teaching would bring worldly freedom and a quiet and peaceful life in good discipline. But since first Muenzer, who was driven by the spirit of sedition, began to stir up unrest, then Carlstadt, Zwingli and other fanatical teachers disrupted the churches, and now the real picture of this kingdom was seen, namely in the church itself confusion, in the worldly regime turmoil. Finally, in the saints the highest weakness, and since, as the poet 1) says, only this One salvation was, that one hoped for no salvation in the face of so many and such great dangers, which broke in from all ropes, then only (therefore) very many people became fainthearted and jumped off and even began to hate the gospel.

What else was the cause of this evil but that they did not know the nature of the kingdom of Christ? For it is of such a nature that it is attacked by all cords from the devil and from the world. Those who do not know this will fall away in danger and condemn the gospel as a rebellious doctrine. So that David may first fortify the hearts against these aversions, in this psalm he depicts the kingdom of Christ according to all its circumstances, and especially he makes this circumstance clear as a master in the art of oratory, that this kingdom will have so many and mighty adversaries. For from there he makes his beginning and speaks:

V. 1. Why do the Gentiles rage and the people talk in vain?

This is a very emphatic (*patheticum*) beginning, and an extraordinarily appropriate figure of speech. For the prophet is full of wonder, saying, What is this thing? The heathen rage, the people talk and

not against the king of the Persians, not against the Turk, but "against the Lord. Must not these suggestions be ridiculous, foolish and futile? Therefore, no one should be afraid, no one should be frightened by these counsels, the outcome of which will show that they were completely null and void. For they are not undertaken against men, as it seems, but against the Lord. Thus he immediately draws us away from fear to hope, and gives the consolation that the people and the Gentiles will perish if they do not drop these counsels, because they counsel against God and not against men.

Read the writings of the papists and listen to their sermons, and you will find that they base themselves on this single ground of proof, that they say that nothing good has come from our teaching. For immediately after our gospel was preached, the terrible peasant revolt followed, disagreements arose in the church and mobs, discipline fell away, and as if the bars of the laws were broken, all began to make use of the greatest licentiousness; as indeed it is true. For there is now a greater licentiousness in all vices than was the case in former times, when the common people were kept in check by fear, who now, like a licentious horse, do everything according to their will. For it despises the bonds of the church with which it was previously held under the papacy, and also abuses the negligence of the secular authorities. All these damages, which are by no means small, our adversaries impose on our doctrine or on the gospel.

But postpone your judgment a little and first think about the whole thing a little more carefully, put its reason for proof into vain dialectical form and see whether this is a good conclusion: This theologian is evil, therefore theology is also evil. This jurist is not worthy, therefore the knowledge of law is also evil. This magister is a fornicator, therefore the arts he teaches are fornication. Would we not say that he would be nonsensical who would take these conclusions as good and established?

1) VirgNius, lii. III, v. 510.

and yet the conclusions that our adversaries make are not much more understandable. But listen 1) to the Psalm which predicts that when this king will begin his kingdom, that is, when he will begin to teach, the raging of the nations will follow, the rebellion of the peoples, the battles and wars of the kings, the plots and counsel of the princes. Against whom? Against the Lord and his anointed.

Therefore, you must first fortify your conscience and, warned by the Holy Spirit in this scripture, firmly believe that the world will stir up rebellion. Do not attribute the cause of this uproar to this king or to his word, but to the devil and the ungodly world, and rather hold to the opposite, saying: "Although evil follows the teaching of this king, the teaching is not evil, but rather the people are evil who oppose the good teaching and want it suppressed. For this is a true and certain conclusion, that the more zealously the world sets itself against this holy doctrine, the angrier and more wicked it is, and that for the sake of men's error there must be no malicious gossip about the doctrine. The Jews crucify Christ, will we for that reason accuse the Teacher, Christ? We must therefore be prepared beforehand to say: What is it to God, what is it to His word, if men are evil? This is man's fault, not God's, who for this reason sends His Son and His Word so that people may be saved, but if they do not want to, they will be lost through their own fault. Christ will not cease to be God's Son for His sake, and God will not reject Him for His sake, whom He has appointed King over all things.

So the beginning of this psalm serves to instruct us that we should learn that when the kingdom or the word of God comes, it comes with rebellion and the raging of kings and princes. The cause of this is indicated by Christ in the Gospel, when he says [Luc. 11, 21. f.] that the devil, like a strong man in armor, holds his palace in peace, but when

If a stronger one comes over him, then he rages and tries everything; as the histories also show. For as often as Christ tries to cast out the devil, how great a rage, how great impetuosity afflicts the possessed! For the devil hates Christ, he hates his word, and he does not want to give way to him or to the word. Therefore, when Christ stops and forces him, he becomes indignant and furious, and tries all his strength, arousing kings and princes, popes and bishops, citizens and peasants, so that they go against the word.

Our opponents do not see this, and thus show that they do not know at all what the kingdom of Christ is like; they only understand what the kingdom of the world is like. Therefore, because they do not see in Christ's kingdom the peace without which the kingdoms of the world cannot exist, they condemn and reject both the word and the kingdom of Christ, preferring the kingdoms of the world. But this psalm teaches us something quite different, namely that we should cling to the kingdom of Christ, even though all men rage. For what is that to us? For our peace is outside this turmoil and is certain, and our King remains King, even against the will of the gates of hell and the world. The world does not see this, not even those who are rich in the wisdom of the world, therefore they strive with great zeal to get us away from this king, and to lead us to their thoughts, so that we too may be anxious to keep the peace of the world. Those who deal with them hold counsel and think that peace can be preserved by human effort. But in truth these attempts are futile and foolish, which the world makes for its own sake, because it has no knowledge of this kingdom. For as you labor in vain with your counsels to prevent the devil from rebelling against Christ, so you also labor in vain to restrain his hands, eyes, tongues, and feet, that is, the princes of the world and the ungodly teachers. For if Christ only begins to open his mouth and speak softly, the devil immediately rages in his limbs, his eyes sparkle, his hands glow, his heart is set on fire, and he sets in motion all that

1) Erlanger: aūi instead of: audi.

there is only power and wealth in the world to suppress the word.

Learn that this is the cause that even in our time sedition and so many ungodly opinions have arisen in the church. For the devil does not like the word. Since Christ is now thundering through his gospel in the whole world, exposing the papal idolatry and abominations, it is certainly not to be expected that the devil should be silent or bite off so much damage to his kingdom, 1) since we have seen that he raged so horribly when the holy man John Hus only rebuked some things concerning life (moralia). For he did not, as we do, reject the sacrifice of the Mass, not the merits, not other services; he doubted the primacy of the pope, he maintained that indulgences should not be sold, he denied purgatory, which he saw yielded so much money: and yet the devil was so moved by this that he at the same time involved Germany and Bohemia in a terrible and protracted war.

So the Holy Spirit instructs and comforts us in this psalm, so that we may firmly cling to this king, and rather look to him than to the troubles and other ailments. For this is the nature of this kingdom, that it cannot be without troubles, not through its fault, but because the devil and the ungodly world cannot stand this king. Learn this, and when troubles arise, when the heathen rage, the people talk, the kings revolt, and the princes counsel how they will oppress this king, be of good courage and do not be moved by this danger. For the second Psalm foretold that it would come to pass that the whole world would be stirred up when this king opened his mouth. That therefore the kings and princes are racing against us at this time, that Zwingli, Carlstadt and others are stirring up unrest in the church, that the citizens and peasants despise the gospel, is nothing new or unusual, and for this reason we should not throw away the gospel, but rather give thanks to your Lord, who has brought us to the-

1) This sentence: [niUaettneSretautcliKMrnlnrsteta. is ironic. For ease of understanding, we have given it negative.

The kingdom which we rightly esteem more highly than the peace and goods of the world, and for whose sake we gladly bear all the outrages and dangers of which the following verse also speaks.

V. 2 The kings of the land rebel, and the lords counsel with one another against the Lord and His anointed.

The Holy Spirit names here four ranks of men who oppose this king in common council. The first are "the kings" or monarchs, who have great dignity and power before others. The second are "the heathen," that is, the subjects of the kings. "The people" are the citizenry (plebes) or the cities (respublicae). But "the lords" are the inferior persons in authority, and all who are able to do something by counsel and wisdom. 2) What, then, did the Holy Spirit omit? What did he not say would be contrary to this kingdom? Power, wisdom, wealth, righteousness, holiness are excellent gifts of God, and yet the world abuses them against the kingdom of God. Is this not the utmost wickedness? But be mindful that the kingdoms are not condemned, not the principatus, not other gifts. For this does not follow: the kingdoms of the world fight against Christ's kingdom, therefore they are evil in themselves; just as this is not a correct conclusion: the iron with which the side of the Lord was opened on the cross was not a good creature; but a distinction must be made between the creature or thing and its abuse. The creature is good, even if it is abused. For the abuse does not come from the thing, but from the evil heart. Thus, civil justice, rights themselves, the arts, studies are by their nature good things, but the abuse is evil, because the world abuses these gifts against God.

2) Interesting is what the old translator offers here (more explaining than translating): "The third are the peoples and people, that is, the great mighty cities and respndiane, such as Genoa, Venice and such imperial cities. But the councillors, the fourth, are all those who are in regiments and have command, as, of the great lords, councillors, scholars and jurists."

In this passage, the world with its kingdoms, pagans, people and lords is portrayed to us in such abuse, for no other reason than so that we, having been prepared beforehand, will not become despondent when this happens to us, that the world cries out that there is nothing with us but heresy, error, rebellion and outrage, and therefore surely condemns us, but it itself triumphs and boasts against us because of its wisdom, honor, power, yes, also because of its justice. We must get used to these sayings and therefore not lose heart. For the Holy Spirit has reminded us of this before, saying that the kings will oppose this kingdom, and the lords will take counsel to overthrow it. These, then, are the cause of the turmoil and uproar, not we, who are humble, peaceable, and calm siud; and the kind of doctrine we bring is not stormy, but exceedingly peaceable. Otherwise, if for the fault of the doctrine these disturbances occurred, it could not be otherwise than that all of us who profess this doctrine would also be restless and stormy. Now, however, we do this with the utmost diligence, that we pray for peace, that we wish that all cause for agitation be cut off. But our adversaries, as their nobility testifies, go about day and night stirring up trouble, pronouncing judgments on our necks, and inciting the lords of the world against us: and yet they accuse our doctrine as if it were seditious and stirring up trouble; but they, they say, are children of peace.

Therefore, we should comfort ourselves with this psalm and firmly believe that the world, when it rages in this way, even though it attacks us, does not attack us alone, but another, who, even though we are a small, weak, little and often oppressed group, is the Lord, and not an ordinary lord, as the lords of the world are, but the Lord of the whole creature. Is not the world an exceedingly great fool, since it thinks itself the most clever of all? If a naked child wanted to oppose a thousand men in armor, who would not

be moved to pity by his certain danger? If someone promised to make the light of the sun invisible with a lit straw, who would not laugh at that? But it is precisely in this foolishness, in this certain danger, that the world moves on and on, since it sets itself against the Word and the church; for it sets itself against the Lord and the Creator of all things Himself. This psalm wants to instill this confidence and comfort in our hearts. But we need a large and wide-open eye, so that with one glance we may embrace all kings with all their wisdom and power, and consider them as a lighted straw, which he who created heaven and earth and all things can extinguish with one breath.

If we estimate in a human way the pagans, the kings, the people, the lords, they are something immeasurably great; therefore we tremble when we compare our weakness with their power. But what does the Spirit teach in this passage? He contrasts this as it were infinite power with the one Lord, and is surprised that the world can be so foolish as to think that it can do something against the Lord, when in truth it is like a speck of fire compared to a whole sea. As if to say: Is it not utter foolishness that you should undertake to dry up a whole sea? Just as we ourselves, when we are in danger, hardly believe this, so also kings and lords never allow themselves to be persuaded that they are a speck; they think that they are like conflagrations. But already from the beginning of the world, the outcome and experience have taught the highest monarchs, who sat down against this Lord, otherwise.

Therefore, the whole emphasis lies on what he says in the second verse, that the heathen rage, the people talk, the kings rebel and the lords counsel "against the Lord" first of all, then also against Christ or "his anointed". For it is not for nothing that he remembers the Lord first, but wants to show us that God the Father is primarily attacked by the angry world, even though the world says that it does not set itself against God the Father, the Creator of all things,

1) Instead of eatapbrMtis in the editions, probably eataptiraetis should be read.

and also the papists today say that they are not opposed to his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, whom they also confess with their mouths as the Savior of the world; but against his gospel, which is foolishness to the wise of this world, and an offence and heresy to those who are full of their own righteousness, just as the Jews did not want to be regarded as opposing God, the Creator of heaven and earth, but the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they did not receive as the Son of God promised in Moses and the prophets, but persecuted as a rebellious and blasphemous man, and finally killed.

But because he is the anointed of the Father, that is, appointed and sent by the Father to be like the sun against the world, which is, as it were, a speck, it happens that all who either reject this Son or set themselves against him run against God, the Creator of all things. On both sides, then, the world deceives itself, however gloriously it may boast of its wisdom. First, it does not see this great Lord against whom it rebels. Secondly, it does not see its weakness, that it is like a dark and small spark compared to the brightness of the sun. But we must judge things rightly and base our judgment not on the opinions of the world, but on the word, which compares the world with all its power to a fading speck. If this undertakes to dry up the sea, it will be swallowed up and covered in an instant. Whoever believes this has the right knowledge of Christ and his kingdom. But the consolation is even greater and more abundant in that it is not we who are attacked by the wrathful and angry world, but that the Anointed of God Himself is attacked, who is the Head of the Church, and God Himself, who is the Head of Christ, as Paul says [1 Cor. 11:3]. Therefore, what will the world obtain? or how is it possible that we should be endangered? Surely the world will not be able to subdue the Anointed One whom GOD has appointed, nor will it even be able to defeat the LORD or cast him down from heaven. Why then do we fear, why then do we tremble at this so foolish and futile

the nobility of the world? Why do we not rather laugh at the utter foolishness of the world?

Therefore, in the name of Jesus, whom the Father has appointed anointed, let us also sing this psalm in our churches, as the apostles sang it, and mock the much-vaunted proof of our adversaries, since they presume to govern us and hold it against us: What good has come from our teaching, since riots, wars, heresies, and mobs have arisen in great numbers after the spread of the gospel; these speeches, I say, let us scoff at, and rather mock them with the Holy Spirit, saying: Why do the heathen rage? why do men counsel in vain? why do kings assemble against the Lord? why do lords plot against his anointed? For if the world would do its duty, it would kiss the Son and accept the Father's commandment from the Son. Now it is doing neither; it is taking up arms, it is making wars, it is creating sects, so that we may firmly believe that the Holy Spirit has not lied, who so lukewarmly foretold through his servant David that it would happen that when this king came with his thunder, not a tree or two, but the whole world would be moved and everything that is great in the world, as he says in another Psalm [Ps. 104:32], that the earth shall shake and the mountains be moved [Ps. 46:3, 4].

That is why even the godly have these thoughts that they wish they had rather kept silent than spoken, since such great movements have arisen. But throw these thoughts far away, and certainly consider that we are dealing here with greater things than the tranquil life of the world and peace, with all the goods of the world. For it is a matter here of recognizing, exalting and worshipping the one whom God the Father has appointed as His anointed. Those who do not want to do this may still rage, be indignant, rage, set heaven and earth in motion. But the Lord, who has appointed his anointed, will cast them into hell, but the word and the church and the head of his church, Christ, he will preserve forever. Amen.

V. 3. Let us break their bands and throw off their ropes.

Here the Holy Spirit explains the cause of the raging, and what plots they make, and what the kings and lords consult with one another, namely, that they deal with it with all their might and with all their effort, that they may break the bonds of Christ and the Father. For this is Satan's purpose, not only to humiliate us, not only to kill us who teach and believe, but also to utterly destroy and destroy the word, the name of Christ, baptism, and all that our religion has. Because we therefore teach Christ with the greatest fidelity, he begins to rage; he takes the hearts of lords, of kings, of wise men, of mighty men, even of the great multitude. Here they all lie down in common counsel to break these bonds, that is, to extinguish the Word and to take up the cause of idolatry. On both sides, therefore, we are beset by Satan, who is armed with power and cunning. He exercises power through kings, pagans, lords, people; but he uses cunning when he awakens in us the delusion that the word can be preserved and peace maintained at the same time. For by nature we all have an abhorrence of unrest, the disadvantages of which are known and in sight, and we love peace, the most beautiful of all things, as he says. But whoever indulges in these thoughts will gradually be brought to the point of losing the kingdom of Christ over the desire to have peace.

Therefore, we must learn to fix our eyes firmly on this King of ours and pay attention to him, and not be moved by the noise of weapons and the disturbances that are stirred up, but rather firmly believe that kings, lords, pagans and people and the whole world, when they sit down against this King, are an hour, but Christ is a tremendously great mountain. Whoever has this firmly in his heart will not be moved by the attempts of the devil and the world. Sects may arise, churches may be troubled, he will say: What is that to me? The world may go to ruin, if only the Lord will help me.

Christ remains unharmed. Peace is the most beautiful of all things, but if it cannot be preserved, what else is lost but a little spark of the creatures? But in Christ I have righteousness, blessedness and eternal life. These are the true goods, compared to which the peace of the world and other advantages of this life are nothing, because they are uncertain and last a short time. In this way we must comfort ourselves, otherwise it will happen that, moved by these bodily adversities, if we do not set the spiritual and eternal against them, we will tremble, fear and complain as in a great calamity, and from this little spark will finally arise a great conflagration, which will completely take away and devour Christ with all his gifts in us.

David sees in his spirit the raging of the world, which opposes Christ with all its power, but is not troubled by it in his heart, so that we too may not be troubled by the Turk, the Pope, the kings and lords when they oppose this king. For they are foolish and blind, and do not see that they are doing an impossible thing by endeavoring to suppress the gospel. In the same way, we are to overcome the other aversions. Muenzer aroused a riot in Thuringia, Carlstadt and Zwingli aroused frightful unrest in the church by trying to persuade others that in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Christ are not received with the mouth, but only bread and wine. With these others join, and little by little this harmful doctrine fills France, Italy, and other nations. Truly a great evil on both sides, that both the secular government and the church are so shaken. What shall we do now, who are not the authors of these disturbances, but only spectators? Shall we therefore harden ourselves almost to death? as I have indeed done more than once and, wanting to remedy this evil, felt that I was so wounded that (God is my witness) my faith was in grave danger and became weak. But finally, by the grace of God, I realized that these very thoughts, worries, sorrows, and

I have been a victim of the ignorance of the kingdom of Christ and harmful foolishness. Therefore, I have regained my courage and said: This is happening through no fault of my own, so let the authors of these evils torture themselves, not me. I will do everything I can to see if I can control these evils, but if I cannot, I will not consume myself in suffering. If one coiner, one Carlstadt, one Zwingli is not enough for the devil, he may raise more of them. I know that this is the nature of this kingdom, that the devil does not like it. He stubbornly tries tooth and nail to destroy the churches and to oppose the word. But that afterwards a tremendous cry is raised: that unrest arises which was not there before, that peace is taken away, that the licentiousness of the great crowd is stimulated, - of these complaints many think that they are just. But why do these people not also complain that the gospel is so despised? Why do they not complain about the tremendous stubbornness of the opponents of the word and the unseemly raving, about the dishonor done to Christ? Certainly they consider the benefits of peace greater than Christ; they are more moved by them than by the glory of God and the salvation of souls. But if you are not moved or troubled by these great things, do you not think that Christ will say to you: If the harm of my kingdom does not move you, if you do not grieve that my kingdom is being torn apart in such manifold and shameful ways, why should I grieve over your harm, that peace is being disturbed, and other things? Yes, you may rather perish completely than that my kingdom should perish.

It would be desirable to recognize this king and his kingdom in this way, so that we would also despise those who despise him and trust only in the goods of this king, not in the goods and advantages of the world.

For behold, how great is the ungodliness of the adversaries. The gospel, which proclaims the grace of God, which promises righteousness and eternal life, is called by them

"Bands" and "ropes" or a yoke. But what would you do with such a shameful beggar, who, if you offered him a thousand guilders as a gift, would unkindly refuse the gift and say that it would only be a burden for him? Would you not judge that he was worth dying of hunger and thirst? But it is with this sin that kings, lords, pagans and people provoke God. He gives them the Word and with it eternal life, but they take up arms so that they will not be forced to enjoy these gifts; therefore, they instigate wars and fill everything with unrest, because God promises that for the sake of His Son He will forgive sins and give all goods abundantly, even in this life. Is the world not worthy to be thrown into the eternal fire?

Therefore, remember that the kingdom of Christ is of such a nature that the whole world resists it, and especially everything that has authority in the world through dignity, power, wisdom, justice and wealth. Therefore, hearts must be fortified so that they do not tremble for its sake, but think that these troubles cannot be avoided or prevented by any moderation or in any other way. For the world always remains the same, and easily yields to the will of the devil, who hates the word to the uttermost; yea, even our flesh and the wisdom of the flesh with our own conscience opposes this kingdom and this king. Therefore, let no one think that he is playing a child's game when he confesses the Word and faith in Christ. For he will realize that his adversaries are the kings and lords whom the devil stirs up. Even though we are no match for them, God still wants us to take up the fight with them, so that He may bring glory and show His wisdom and power in our weakness, by giving power from heaven, which even the gates of hell cannot resist, to put to shame the wisdom and power of all the opponents of the Word.

In this place, then, do you have a description of the thoughts, the precepts, and the counsels of kings and lords, of the heathen and the people, yea, even of your flesh and conscience, which the devil also afflicts, there-

with you intend to break this bond and throw this yoke off you. The kings and lords use force and weapons, but your heart fights against this kingdom with unbelief, because it doubts the promises, because it does not allow the comfort of the forgiveness of sins, of righteousness by grace in vain, and of eternal life. We must therefore be prepared beforehand to remember, as this Psalm will soon say, that this King was appointed by God the Father. Therefore, when the world rages, when your conscience trembles, be confident and strong, so that your faith will not fall away. No one will push this king from his throne on which God the Father has placed him, and you have been reminded of these dangers by the Holy Spirit through the holy prophets so long before. Therefore, the projectiles that you foresee will harm you less.

So also Sirach reminds [Cap. 2, 1. f. Vulg.]: "My child, if you want to be God's servant, stand in righteousness and fear, and send your soul to contest. Dampen thine heart and suffer thyself, and incline thine ear and receive the words of wisdom" (intellectus). Therefore, let him who will not go into battle, but forsake the banners, abstain from this realm altogether. For the devil will never cease, by the mouth of lords and kings, by ungodly teachers, yea, even by your conscience, to sing this verse, "Let us break their bands, and cast from us their yoke." But consider, and tell me the truth, whether this is not a grievous challenge and an exceedingly grievous sin, that the world should call the gospel, this lovely message of the forgiveness of sins and eternal life, which Christ has purchased for us and given us freely, "bands" and a "yoke"?

Look in the spirit at all the kingdoms of the whole world, and you will see that they are exceedingly unequal, and, that I say so, completely separated from each other, not only as far as external (carnal) power is concerned, but much more in what concerns religion, laws and customs.

How many idols did the one city of Rome have? how many of Greece? how many of Egypt? And yet they have given religion

The Romans, even when they were masters of the Greeks, did not hate the Greeks because their worship was different. The Romans, even when they were the masters of the Greeks, did not hate the Greeks because their worship was different, but rather accepted their worship, as the Histories indicate with regard to the Eleusian sacrifices, the serpent of Epidauru, 1) the image of the goddess Jdea 2c. The world always bore this infinite diversity with the highest equanimity. Even with us, before the light of the Gospel went out, how great was the diversity of the services, not only in the different districts, but also in each individual church! This has never been an offense to anyone. But when Christ comes with his Gospel to abolish this diversity and to unite all in one body, then all those who are totally different in religion conspire with each other and become one, as it were, to suppress this kingdom. For what was the Pabst's kingdom but a monster with different heads, especially if one looks at the monks, of whom this one chose Augustine, that one Franciscus, a third Dominic, a fourth Benedictus, 2) depending on whether he thought he was worthy of the highest esteem. The pope tolerated this diversity, and although the monks hated each other with irreconcilable (vatiniano) hatred, now that the Gospel has been revealed, they agree to oppose it, and unanimously put together their counsels, their efforts, and their fortunes (opes). Who does not see that this is done by Satan's wiles, who can tolerate all other religions, but hates and persecutes this One, which is the true one, and makes men judge that it is an unbearable yoke?

But why does the world do this? Go

1) Aesculapius was worshipped at Epidaurus under the image of a serpent. The Eleusian services were held in honor of Ceres. In honor of Ceres.

2) The word "erwählte" is added by us to give sense. - Instead of putunt in the Erlanger we have assumed with the Wittenberger and the Jenaer: putavit. The old translator offers here: "one has ... Benedictum immediately as a God raised up and held, thereby he vermeinte to become blessed."

The gospel has no other purpose than to free our consciences from the fear of death, to make us believe in the forgiveness of sins, and to give us the hope of eternal life through the Son of God who was given for us. The gospel teaches these things in such a way that it does not condemn, abolish, or change authority, laws, goods, or other things, but leaves them in their proper place, and is only concerned to heal consciences, so that they may not be without comfort and help, oppressed by sins and the fear of death. Why does the world not allow this? Why does it call it a yoke, why does it call it a bond, and why does it refuse to tolerate it? I answer: It does not want to lose its righteousness, it does not want its wisdom to be put to shame, yes, it does not want to let go of its honor and its power, and, to say it in one word, it does not want to and cannot keep the first commandment, but fights against it with all the powers of the will, of the intellect, and stakes all its possessions on it. It should love God and prefer Him to all things, but it loves itself and its own; it should exalt the justice of God alone and base itself on it, but it respects its own justice so highly that it does not care about God's justice at all. Therefore, the world, like a monkey loves its young, only that which belongs to the world, it delights in it, it is proud of it, it puffs itself up with it; everything else that is outside of it, and only stands in faith, it carelessly neglects and tramples it underfoot as an unknown treasure.

But the gospel has only to do with placing Christ before the souls and eyes of all, and commands that all look to him alone, cling to him alone, rely on and trust in him alone, who took our flesh and in our flesh overcame the devil, killed death, and devastated and destroyed hell. Of him alone it preaches that he alone is wise, because he alone knows and does the will of the Father. He alone is called righteous, because he not only has not committed sin, but also can and will communicate his righteousness to all who believe in him. Him

alone it calls a mighty one, because he alone overcame the strong one who keeps his palace and robbed him of his armor [Luc. 11, 21. ff.]. Therefore it wants us to trust in his wisdom, justice and power alone, and only then it promises that we too will be wise, just and mighty. If we lack this wisdom, we are in truth fools, sinners and weak. But the world wants to tear this doctrine as if it were a band, and seeks to throw it off as a yoke.

Thus, all the dispute with this king is about the first commandment, and the Holy Spirit, through this prophecy, primarily wanted to strengthen our hearts against this trouble, that the most powerful kings and lords, the holiest and wisest people, by whose wisdom kingdoms and communities are ruled, by whose justice and equity they flourish, oppose this king for no other reason than because they do not want to be fools before God; They cannot bear to hear that laws, discipline, respectability and other good works are of no use in attaining eternal life and the forgiveness of sins. Therefore they rage, rage, counsel, and rebel against the gospel as a seditious and pernicious doctrine, which gives rise to licentiousness, which prevents good works, or at least rejects and condemns them, since it says that they are of no use for righteousness.

But how true this accusation is, pious people may judge. For the gospel does not condemn good works, for that would be to condemn and abolish the law; rather, it establishes the law, as Paul teaches [Rom. 3:31], since it shows the way in which one can satisfy the law, and continues to exhort one to do the law and to good works. One thing forbids that we should not trust in these things as if we would thereby be justified before God. For it teaches that we are to build righteousness on the crucified Son of God alone. If we take hold of this in faith, it promises that we will be righteous before God, even though we are sinners before ourselves and before the world; it promises that we will be strong, even though we are weak; it promises that we will be wise, even though we are weak.

We are fools in the sight of the world. Therefore, it commands us to trust in the crucified Son of God. But the world refuses to do so because it does not see this righteousness, power and wisdom. Therefore, it does not want to lose the present things, which it sees before its eyes and holds with its hands, and does not want to be bound to the invisible and nowhere appearing things, of which the gospel preaches. That is why it calls it bonds, that is why it calls it a yoke with which it is bound and oppressed, so that it does not give up the opinion that the wisdom, righteousness and power that it has is something significant.

That is where such speeches come from: What? Is man nothing? Does he not have a free will? Is God the cause that the wicked are condemned? For why did He not create them righteous? Are our ancestors, who did not know this, all damned? but you alone are wise, righteous and blessed? One hears and reads such speeches everywhere, and the blind people cannot be helped, since they do not want to hear. For we diligently remind, write, preach and cry out that one should make use of God's wisdom, power and other creatures in this life to govern and order earthly affairs; there is their place, where our reason, as it were, runs in their racecourse, works and cares as much as it can, but before God all this is nothing, also counts for nothing, because there a better justice and a greater power is required than we possess. But there is a story told to a deaf person, for they cry out against it, calling it bondage and an unbearable yoke, because they see that their wisdom and righteousness are bound before God as a useless and ineffective one. "We do not want this one to rule over us" [Luc. 19, 14.], they cry out, like the Jews, condemning the doctrine alike, and those who agree with it, calling them rebels, heretics, and possessed by the devil. But they, like the Pharisees and scribes, boast of the chair of Moses, the name of the church, and take only the name of the church.

claimed for themselves the possession of justice and wisdom, even with weapons and sword.

This is the true image of the world; it hates Christ the King and His kingdom, and tries everything that it thinks can serve to suppress this kingdom. But what is the hope of the church in such great dangers?

V. 4. But He who dwells in heaven laughs at them, and the Lord mocks them.

This is the voice of the Holy Spirit, sent by the mouth of the prophet because of our smallness and small number, which he sees, and also because of the great multitude and power of the kings and adversaries. For everything that is high in the world unites and unites its forces against the church, which, as it is small in number, so also lacks in general all the gifts with which the world flaunts. Therefore, since it is overwhelmed with adversities, as with the waters of the sea, since it overestimates so many kings' armaments, power, wealth, with which it is attacked, it fears and trembles. For the human heart is not of iron or stone, but of flesh and soft, therefore it is moved in such certain dangers. For it does not happen that a Christian has only one enemy against him, but kings and lords, pagans and people stand up against him, as the Holy Spirit prophesies in this passage, yes, all devils attack one and lay themselves against him, that I meanwhile say nothing of the anxieties with which he is afflicted in conscience.

In this great danger, the merciful Lord comes with his word, and opposes this multitude of evils and aversions with other far greater things. For he not only says, as in the 11th Psalm 2) [v. 5. Vulg.], "The eyes of the Lord look upon the poor," but he also says of these enemies of the church and all their attempts: "He that dwelleth in heaven laugheth at them, and the Lord mocketh at them." Thus, with one word of comfort, he completely puts down all that there is of raging men, lords, kings and devils. Those who set themselves against the church are, to be sure

1) It seems to us that before xutet one of is lacking; after that we have translated.

2) In the editions: in 10. pkalino.

great and mighty; they are also many, they are rich in wisdom, they have the name of being righteous; whereas we are a little multitude and weak, therefore, besides being crushed to the ground by the multitude and greatness of the majesties of the world, we are also troubled and frightened by our conscience and weakness, which we are well aware of. Therefore, we must learn this consolation, so that we will not be dismayed by such a frightening picture, but speak: I also know One who dwells in a fortified and impregnable castle, to which not only lords and kings, but even Satan cannot reach. For all these are either on earth or in the air, but the house of this King is heaven itself, where neither the power of men nor of the devil can do anything.

Therefore, out of contempt for the adversaries of the church, he does not call him by name who is in the stronghold of heaven, but simply says XXXXX XXX, "who dwells in heaven". This he opposes, completely full of spirit and faith, in defiance and contempt of all the raging of the world and of hell, as if he wanted to say: "The pagans and kings may come, the people and the lords, the Anabaptists may come, the Sacramentarians, the rebels, and other spirits of the imagination, but because they are powerful on earth they will not ascend to heaven. They are wretched worms of the earth; there they rage, rage, rage. But what does he who dwells in heaven do? Is he afraid, as we are? Does he tremble and be moved? Clearly, this is not the case, but he ridicules the foolishness and futility of men. This is a new and unheard-of speech. For reason confidently says that God either does not see such things, and therefore everything happens by chance, or if he sees it and does not defend the wicked, he is weak. For she thinks that if one sees that it is unseemly, and suffers it, when one can prevent it, it is a sign of an unjust and unreasonable mind. Reason adorns God with such honor that it judges him to be either foolish, because he neither sees nor knows many things, or evil, because he does not defend against what he sees.

Against such blasphemies the Holy Spirit equips us here, so that we do not think for the sake of it that God does not see the intentions of the wicked, since He sees through their fingers. How great and how horrible is the cruelty and inhumanity of the Turk! With how great hatred the popes and the bishops glow against the word and the true members of the church! The attacks of the tyrants are also hostile. We should not think that our Father in heaven does not know this, or that it is hidden from his eyes. He sees it, but is not moved to anger as quickly as we are; he hides his anger and laughs for a while, not only because he sees that such pretensions are in vain, but because he gives room for repentance.

This is a spiritual thought by which the church and all its members are to be instructed, so that we too may be led from the visible things to the invisible. The visible and tangible things are the raging of the world, the tyranny of the Turk and the Pope. But this laughter of Him who dwells in heaven is invisible to us, therefore it must be believed; then it will happen that we also laugh, since the enemies of the church speak vain things. For the fact that the Holy Spirit says that God laughs and mocks the ungodly is done for our sake, so that we too may laugh with God, and not be unwilling or tremble when popes, bishops, lords and kings deal with suppressing the gospel by force, yes, when the devil showers the church with all kinds of aversions, for they are vain counsels. But we learn that this laughter is almost impossible for us, because we can neither despise the visible nor grasp the invisible; we feel the power and authority of kings and lords, the wisdom of the world, the malice of Satan, yes, the burden of sin and our conscience; therefore we do not laugh, but howl, let our courage sink, despair, and in this way embitter our whole life. But wrongly. For what good is it if we grieve ourselves to death? For the world can never be helped; the devil will never become kinder.

Therefore, we should learn to lift up our hearts in such dangers, and laugh

with our God, of whom it is certain that he will not always laugh, but will finally be angry with the wicked and frighten them, as will follow immediately. But our laughter will be all the easier if we do not forget what he said before about the Lord and his anointed. For this we must hold as certain, that all these temptations, all this raging and raging of the world against us is done for Christ's sake. He alone is the cause that the world and the devil, yes, even our own heart is ungracious to us, as he himself says [John 15:19]: "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." It is the same with sin. For who should not be surprised that the world, which lives in sins, which not only does not believe the forgiveness of sins, but, since it is offered in the Word, also rejects it, nevertheless lives in the highest security, whereas the members of the church, who hear the forgiveness of sins, take hold of it and believe to some extent, are alone plagued day and night by fear and almost consumed by heartache?

What is the cause of this? Nothing else but that they are Christians and take hold of the word of Christ. Therefore the devil inculcates sin in them, torments them with fear of death and eternal damnation, and never allows godly hearts to rest. What then shall we do? Shall we weep and lament, lose heart and die of grief? Not at all. For in this way we will accomplish nothing. Rather, let us lift up our heads, as Christ commands (Luc. 21:28) when he prophesies of his future (adventu), and laugh, even though the devil and the world (yes, even sin and our conscience in us) are raging. For since the punishment of the wicked is still delayed, it is certain that God also laughs, who is in heaven, and cannot be cast down from it by the wicked; he therefore rightly laughs at the futile attempts; and we, too, may think that we would laugh, 1) if we were in such a high place and in such a

fortified castle. For we would firmly believe that even if the power and the rage of the kings, the lords and also the devil were still so great, they would remain down here on earth and could not reach us. But these thoughts show our unbelief. For all of us who believe in Christ are in truth in the same heaven in which the Lord dwells, if not in the flesh, yet in faith and word.

In this way one must ascend from the visible things to the invisible ones, and eyes and heart must be directed away from the present, to the heavenly, where these outrages are not only in vain, but overcome fifteen hundred years ago. For thus Christ says [John 16:33], "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," and comforts us because of the judgment [John 16:11] that the prince of the world is already judged. Since these conquered enemies renew the war again, they do nothing but make God laugh. Children make us laugh when they take a straw and want to strangle dogs or pigs with it, as with a knife; and no one among us could refrain from laughing if he saw a fool who took a little stick in his hand and ran with great power against a tower, thus trying to throw the tower down, for such an undertaking would be foolish and futile. In this way we would also think of the world's undertakings, armaments, power, wrath and rage, if we would lift up our hearts and minds to the one who dwells in heaven and look at him rightly. For if you compare the Turk, the pope, the bishops, the kings and lords, and the whole kingdom of Satan with this, are they not like such a fool as tries to overturn a mighty tower with a stick? They therefore play a game and a joke on GOtte, "make a carnival play for him when they are at their angriest," and in truth, when they are busy with such thoughts and undertakings, they are nothing else but a gankel booth and, as we say in German, "users HErrn GOtte's Gaukelsack".

1) In the Wittenberg: visnros instead of: risuros.

This is a hidden wisdom, which is learned only from the word that draws us away from the present and visible and brings us over to the absent and invisible. The present is that if we confess Christ and believe in him, the world is senseless and raging. But do not let this cause you to be distressed in your conscience; leave this feeling and this unpleasant sight, and go with Moses into the mist and darkness, that is, take hold of the invisible things, climb up to the Lord and the word of His promise, and learn that God laughs at this unbelievable foolishness, that the world with the devil undertakes to harm and overthrow the kingdom of God. The wretched people do not see that all their power is only earthly, but that this King dwells in heaven, since they cannot ascend.

But all that I say of the kings, or of the adversaries of the gospel, I say of every man's conscience in particular, that we should learn to rise up and be strong, not against tyrants, but against ourselves. For the devil oppresses and persecutes us more by our own heart and conscience than by sword and tyranny. For the Turk can do no greater harm than to cut off the head and strangle it; but our heart can cause us such a disputation, such a grief, that we would be lost in it for eternity, if we were not saved by the Spirit and the word of the Lord. Therefore, the devil is nowhere more powerful, more cunning, stronger, holier, more righteous, than in our hearts. When we have conquered him here, when we have thrown him out of this seat with firm faith and have gone to the invisible, then we will not regard the wrathful lords, kings and tyrants a hair's breadth. But if they frighten us, this fear does not come from them, but from our heart, which is weak and clings to the present, but cannot grasp the absent and invisible.

Therefore, we should learn to be strong in all dangers, but especially against ourselves and our heart. For there the devil has an exceedingly firm seat and is aptly supported by

the past. For he knows that we are sinners, therefore he holds the register of our sins and the sad handwriting [Col. 2, 14.] before our eyes and presses us. Yea, he seizes also the present, and confronts us with it, that we believe not yet as firmly as we ought, love not yet as fervently, and are also contested with impatience. Since he makes this great, for he is a cunning and mighty speaker, the courage is broken, and the heart is frightened, not only by the raving of lords and kings, but also by the rustling of a falling leaf. Therefore, let us fortify our hearts, and let us sound to the invisible and to the darkness of the word, and let us not be afraid nor terrified of what we feel within us or outside of us, which is tangible and visible and perceived by the flesh. We are to strip off all our feeling and go where this verse leads us, namely to the invisible. And when Satan holds out to you: Behold, thou art a sinner, thou believest not so, thou lovest not so as the word requires, thou sayest against it: Why do you trouble me with these visible things? I feel them very well, and it is not necessary that you teach me about them; it is necessary that I follow the word and go to the invisible, that is, to the one who dwells in heaven, and to the word of him in whose eyes everything that frightens me is a mere joke and common carnival games) as they are called, which are set up not to frighten, but to cause laughter 2c.

In this way, this verse must be applied in the work not only in the external dangers that are directed against us by the enemies of the Word, by the Turks, by the Pope, the bishops, the kings, the lords, who are all armed with power, with wisdom, with righteousness, but also in spiritual! Temptations, when the devil terrifies the conscience by accusing us in ourselves, because of the sins we have committed. Whoever then has well grasped this verse will laugh at Satan, so-

1) In all editions: *suetuetenla privialia*, but we do not find the word *privialis* in our dictionaries. We suppose that *trivial* should be read in, because in Suetonius is found: *Inui triviale*.

probably his accusations as well as his threats. He will say, "What is that to me? This also moves my God, who dwells in heaven, to laugh. You will not be able to do anything with your accusations and sorrow, but I too will laugh with my God, for I know that your pretensions are in vain. For though I am a sinner, though the punishment of sin is eternal death, yet for this reason I will not cease to laugh, because he who sits at the right hand of God, who has done enough for sins, and has overcome and cast you down in his flesh, sits at the right hand of God, for you attack not only me, but also him who overcame you, the Son of God 2c.

For this must be held without wavering, that all persecution, even spiritual persecution, which takes place in our hearts through the devil, is for Christ's sake. For to believe in the forgiveness of sins through Christ is the highest article of our faith, and it is true that whoever believes this article has forgiveness of sins. That is why the devil tries so hard to take this faith from us. But whoever follows the thoughts of the devil with which he plagues us in order to extinguish the hope of the forgiveness of sins, sins. Let us not therefore follow the thoughts of our heart, which accuses us of sin, and holds that the hope of the forgiveness of sins does not belong to him, for that would be to follow Satan, who torments us not only indirectly through princes and tyrants, but also directly through sin and our heart; but let us oppose him with great courage, and say: By no means shalt thou afflict and terrify me. For he is risen full of the dead, who commanded me to be confident. Therefore I will laugh, but not howl, as thou wilt, as if I were alone and without helpers.

But how much effort it takes and how long it takes to learn this art, experience will teach everyone. The words, of course, have been learned very easily: The righteous will be without all fear; a Christian need fear neither sin nor death, but can laugh at the devil and his threats.

you could be of cheerful heart when either your conscience accuses you, or heresies and aversions arise. For the flesh immediately begins to tremble, and would that everything were quiet even from anguish. But because it comes quite differently, and everything is unjust, ungodly, foolish, unholy, blasphemous, tempestuous and restless, which comes to light and is before the eyes, so by this visible is displaced the invisible, of which the Holy Spirit teaches us in this passage. Therefore, we should get used to these storms, in which a Christian must live and move constantly, and hide ourselves in the darkness, and seize the invisible. Then we will laugh at the raging of the Turk, the popes, the tyrants, the mobs, the heretics and all those who are opposed to the kingdom of Christ, as if it were a joking game. He who is able to do this everywhere and at all times is a true doctor of theology. But neither Peter nor Paul nor the other apostles have always been able to do this. Therefore, we too should confess that we are students and not teachers in this art, although we do not even deserve the name of students, since while God laughs, we are either unwilling or displeased.

V. 5. He will speak to them in his wrath one day, and with his fury he will terrify them.

The previous verse described the patience of God, which is unpleasant to us, but with God it is common and ordinary. For he tolerates the raging of the wicked, the mob, the kings, the lords, and the people's nonsense for a time, and, as the poet says, does not immediately send his thunderbolts when people sin. In the meantime, the church is in tribulation and sighs, desiring that vengeance be taken on the wicked, as Christ indicates in the parable of the unjust judge, Luc. 18, 2. f.. For it seems to the godly that this patience of God is without end, and therefore it is almost unbearable, since it afflicts and humbles those who must bear the cross, not just for one or two years, but for several years, and yet this suffering of ours (*patientia*) is nothing when compared to the suffering of the holy patriarchs,

who lived five hundred, six hundred and even more years in the same temptation. These have not, like us, heard only these twenty-seven years, 1) but all their lives the song of the wicked: "Let us break their bands", God does not see, he does not understand this 2c. For the wicked finally fall into this security, since God is so long-suffering and so lukewarm in postponing punishment. But when the wicked thus surely glory, but the godly are grieved and sigh, then it is imminent that God, who laughed when the godly wept and sighed, but the wicked surely raged, will be moved to anger. This is the end of this song.

So this verse contains an exceedingly sweet promise, as they are everywhere in the Psalms, Ps. 9, 10: "The Lord is the poor man's shelter, a slit in his trouble"; and Ps. 10, 14: "Thou seest misery and distress; thou bringest justice to the poor and the fatherless"; and Ps. 68, 24: "Thy foot shall be dyed in the blood of the enemy"; and Ps. 110, 6: "The Lord shall bruise the head of great lands." Not only the examples in the holy scriptures, but also those of the Gentiles agree with these promises. For this is how it is constantly admitted in the world: truth and justice suffer, and especially in the church truth is ridiculed, scorned, even beaten, as if there were no God, or at least God did not see or care about human affairs. But if you look at the end, you will see that the truth is indeed attacked, but that it cannot be suppressed, because He who dwells in heaven, though He laughs for a time at the futile pretensions of the wicked, does not always laugh, but also speaks, and that in anger, and in such a manner that

1) This time determination, which would point us to the year 1544 from the year 1517, does not come from Luther himself, but was set by Veit Dietrich at the time when he was preparing this writing for printing. At that time, the editors of Luther's writings allowed themselves such changes very often; therefore, we not infrequently encounter in later editions of one and the same writing other time indications than in the first, because the editors reckoned up to their days. - We encounter such a time indication again in the following Col. 110.

the wicked become ashamed, who, as if they had already won the victory, celebrated joyful triumphs.

This promise, therefore, is our hope, and serves chiefly to raise up our wretched consciences, which almost oppress those who sing, "Let lins break their bands." For it is not in our powers that we should impose silence upon them, that they should not sing, nor can we so stop up our ears that we should not hear this song of the wicked. Therefore, we must disregard this assurance, and bear it, and overcome by patience until the time when the LORD begins to speak. For he has a tremendous voice, like a trumpet, which silences the wicked, while we can hardly make a sound before their clamor.

The particle XX does not designate a certain time or hour (*terminum*), but is an indefinite word: It will come to pass that he speaks, however long it may take that he finally speaks; and then the laughter, which is hidden as long as the wicked sing safely, will be revealed, as the 91st Psalm, v. 8, says: "You will see with your eyes how it is recompensed to the wicked." For the judgments of God are not hidden; at last the wrath of God is seen in bright light, of which the wicked think that He sleeps, and judge that He is not mindful of what they do. The examples of this are before our eyes. The rule of the Romans was exceedingly powerful, and yet, since it intended the destruction of Christ's kingdom, it itself was destroyed and came to ruin, but the church, which held fast to the faith in the promises, remained unharmed, even though it was severely afflicted. Therefore, those who lived at that time saw with their eyes the retribution, that a thousand fell on the right and ten thousand on the left, and yet the church remained unharmed.

Thus, under King Hezekiah, the people of God had a miserable appearance. The Assyrian, who had carried away ten tribes captive, besieged Jerusalem and had severely afflicted the other parts of the kingdom of Judah. At that time, the Lord laughed as at a futile undertaking, but the afflicted ones

The church could not laugh, but was completely in tears and mourning. But hasn't the laughter of God finally been revealed? After all, didn't the church also begin to laugh when in one night one hundred and eighty-five thousand men were killed by the angel of the Lord? For she sees with her bodily eyes the vengeance on the wicked. Afterward the people, when they were captives in Babylon, saw with their eyes the destruction of Babylon. Thus the histories show that this promise is not empty, but that, although the time is not revealed to us in which the Lord will save the godly, but destroy the ungodly, it will certainly happen, if only we do not become fainthearted, and, strong in faith, persevere in prayer. For as we said above about the unjust judge, God wants to be reminded and provoked by our petitions. Therefore, he wants the tribulation to be felt and borne, but salvation to be believed.

But we also do not want to conceal our experience, not only so that it may be known that this verse is true, but also so that we may gratefully celebrate God by recognizing and firmly keeping in memory and praising his tremendously great benefits and the wonderful way of saving and preserving. The pope and the bishops, the kings and princes who adhere to the pope, have they not sung this verse to the point of hoarseness for almost thirty years now: "Let us break their bonds and throw off their yoke"? Therefore they have made many counsels, and the only thing they lacked was that they did not have the victory in their hands, since they divided the reward of victory among themselves, our princes' cities and castles. But what have they achieved? Have not those who played the first roles in this play (*fabulae*) perished? and may God grant that they too would not have perished for eternity! But those who are still left, are they not in misfortune, and poorer than *Irus*? 2) Since they are either through their fault

1) Compare note Col. 108.

2) *Irus* is the name of a beggar in *Jthaca*, which occurs in Homer; it is used proverbially of a poor person.

have lost what was bequeathed to them by their ancestors, or can only keep and protect it with great difficulty. And the end of the misfortune and the punishments is not yet here; every day they make their cause worse and sink deeper into misfortune. '

Therefore let us persevere in the faith and confession of the word, and not be found among the number of those who, as *Sirach* says [Cap. 2:16], have lost endurance in suffering. They may afflict us, afflict us, afflict us, even kill us, and yet, if we do not despair, if we bear these afflictions in the hope of salvation, the Lord will not forsake us. For he promises here that he will speak in his wrath, and that those will be terrified. Therefore we must pay attention to the particles of the indefinite time: "Once he will speak to them," or he will finally speak once, namely when it seems to him to be the right time. For the laughter in heaven is hidden, but this speaking will be felt on earth. For he will speak to those singers who fill everything with horrible cries, crying, "Let us tear, let us tear!" When he will speak to these, they will truly hear him. But then it will happen, not now, as we wish, to whom every delay under the cross seems long. Therefore, we would like God to speak now, but He will not. But then he will speak, namely when we almost despair and think that he will remain silent forever.

But what or how will he speak? Here one must pay attention to the Hebrew way of speaking. For when the Scripture says that God speaks, it means a word that carries with it a thing (*verbum reale*), or an action, not merely a sound, as our word is. For GOD does not have a mouth nor a tongue, for He is a Spirit. Therefore, this is called God's mouth and tongue [Ps. 33, 9.]: "When he speaks, it comes to pass", and when he speaks, the mountains tremble, the kingdoms are destroyed, yes, the whole earth trembles. This is a different speech than ours. When the sun rises, when the sun sets, God speaks; when the fruit grows, when men are born, God speaks.

GOD. Therefore, God's words are not empty air, but exceedingly great and wonderful things, which we see with our eyes and grasp with our hands. For when the LORD, as Moses writes, said, Let the sun, let the moon, let the earth bring forth trees 2c., immediately what he said came to pass. No one heard this voice, but the works and the things themselves we see before our eyes and grasp with our hands. Thus, in this passage, the Holy Spirit also comforts the godly who groan and languish under the cross, and frightens the ungodly so that they will not be sure, but will certainly believe that God will speak. But if this is done in anger, it is done without end, without hope of help. For when the Lord is angry, it is not a game or a joke, but the wicked feel this word of wrath, both in this life, through many tribulations, and in the life to come, if they do not convert and repent. Such a word of wrath is heard today in Hungary and Germany, since it is plagued by the Turk because of its idolatry and contempt of the Gospel. 1)

But he also uses to speak in grace when he gives peace, a rich yield of the fields, good authorities, godly teachers. These are words of grace. Thus the 147th Psalm, v. 15. says: "He sends his speech on earth; his word runs swiftly." For he lays down how this is to be understood, namely [v. 16. f.] that he gives snow, hoarfrost, closes 2c. But this way of speaking is only in the holy language (which I often encourage the youth to learn, but almost in vain, because their knowledge contributes extraordinarily much to the clear understanding of the Scriptures), which is taken from Moses, who in the first chapter of the first book of Moses, when he mentions that God created all things out of nothing, thereafter speaks thus: "God said, Let there be light, let there be a firmament" 2c., "and there was light", and "God made the firmament". From this passage this way of speaking is taken. For as the Greek poets have Homer, the Latin ones Virgil, whom they follow in

The holy prophets learned from Moses to speak rightly of God's deeds. For they saw that "to speak" is "to do" with God, and that the word is a deed.

At this point, however, it is frightening that the prophet says that God will speak in His wrath. For it is certain that at this word whole rations will fall and will not be able to protect themselves in any way by their own strength or power, so that they will not fall. This is what God spoke in His wrath when He sent the Romans against the holy city of Jerusalem; when He sent the Vandals and the Goths against Rome afterwards. These were tremendous and great words, and a voice of iron that brought down the mightiest rulers. In this way he speaks in his anger when he sends pestilence, famine and other plagues. This will finally be the end of the world's rage, that it will arouse the majesty against it, that it will speak, not words like those of men, which only strike the ears, but which frighten the conscience and are terrifying to behold, namely many thousands of cruel warriors and other plagues, which destroy whole kingdoms from the ground up. But how much better it would be to bear Christ's yoke and not to throw it off; although it is hard on the flesh (for those must bear the cross who want to belong to Christ [nomina dant], for they have powerful and many adversaries, as we have said), yet the Holy Spirit has consolation and peace, not a brief one like that of the world, for whose sake the world throws off this yoke, but an eternal one. The Father chastises the Son, whom he loves. So also Christ speaks in wrath against the flesh, but he also speaks in grace for the spirit. Those who do not want to suffer this yoke, these bonds, will hear another voice, namely many thousands of Turks, who rage and devastate everything far and wide with fire and sword.

But it is not enough for the Lord to have spoken thus in anger to the wicked; the voice of his wrath is followed by terror, so that his enemies are suddenly so distressed in their hearts that they do not know which way to turn, and this is the beginning of destruction. Such a fighter, then, is he who dwells in heaven: in the beginning he conceals his-

1) In 1532 there was a great so-called Türkennoth, to which the Protestants had to thank the Nuremberg Religious Peace (July 23, 1532).

new wrath and laughs at the futile attempts. But if the wicked do not want to desist from it, he does not wound the feet, not the hands, he does not tear the eyes, but only terrifies the hearts. When this has happened, even defenseless and few people can easily prevail over them. We have done many things against the Turks in these twenty years, but we have had no luck with them. Why is that? Our sins have aroused the wrath of God against us. Since he wanted to execute the punishment on us, he armed the Turks, our enemies, against us with anger and cruelty, but he gave us a despondent heart, so that we are rightly reproached for having forgotten our bravery and no longer having the kindness of our ancestors. In this way he has terrified his people, the Jews, under Nebucadnezzar, the Babylonians under Darius and Cyrus, the Persians under Alexander, the Greeks under the rule of the Romans. For the enemies of Christ at all times this verse has overthrown and terrified, and will also overthrow the Turk and the Pope. For it was written by the Holy Spirit to kill and destroy the whole world, because it will not cease from its raging against the Lord and his anointed.

Furthermore, because he says that the Lord will speak, it follows that the wicked are incorrigible and do not want to be healed by those who bring the word of the Lord, which is a word of grace, to them. For if they would pay attention to the word and let themselves be taught, they would give up the endeavor to set themselves against God. But since they do not listen, and surely continue to despise the word and the wholesome teaching, they are forced to hear another voice, which is the voice of wrath, and to which all the opponents of the word must be exposed. For if men will not repent, and blindly pursue their way, this verse follows, that the Lord speaks in his wrath, and terrifies the impenitent. This is the sin of Germany, which threatens certain destruction. For though we exhort with great zeal to accept the Word and to leave off ungodly services, yet the bishops and

Some princes will not listen, but will only be more inflamed against us. Therefore, we too will wait for this voice of wrath, which the wicked will have to hear against their will and to their destruction. In the meantime, let us do as Lot did in Sodom, as Abraham did among the Chaldeans, as the captives did in Babylon. For though they tried to set the ungodly world right, they were not able to do so, but even suffered unworthy treatment, their souls being tormented day and night. And we too cannot hear the blasphemies of the popes and see their idolatry without great heartache. But what shall we do? They do not want to be helped, and just as the apostles could not move Jerusalem to repentance, so our bishops are hastening to their ruin. This we must suffer until the Lord begins to preach to them, not with such a voice as ours, which they despise like a dream, but with the voice of wrath, which with one breath overthrows empires and kingdoms. By such examples, however, we are taught that wherever the Word is, certain calamities and desolations will follow for the sake of those who oppose the Word; and yet, in this ruin of the world, the Word will not fall, but will stand firm. The church, too, will stand, however afflicted and however small it may be. For the sake that the ungodly may be terrified, this King will not cease to be King, but for this reason He speaks in His wrath, for this reason He terrifies His enemies, so that the Word and the Church may remain intact. For the church is able to do this only through the power of God, that it suffers, and yet does not collapse, but remains, yes, gathers strength under the cross and increases. That is why this psalm continues, as if the godless enemies were far away, to teach us about the victory of the Word and the majesty of our King, and says:

V. 6. But I have established my king on my holy mountain Zion.

Here you see the certain judgment that the divine majesty threatens, she/it will overthrow all

and disturb those who are opposed to His word, and God promises that He will nevertheless raise up His King, Christ and His kingdom, that is, His word. But all this can be grasped in faith alone, not with the flesh or the senses. For the flesh cannot believe that in the One Man Jesus, born of Mary, everything stands, that for the sake of this One the whole world must fall away and perish rather than that any harm should come to His kingdom. For if the kings and princes believed this, they would be careful, they would accept him, they would not hate him, and they would not dare to oppress him. But because they do not believe, because they look only at the visible, that is, at their power and wealth, but neglect and despise the invisible, that is, the Word, they fall as blind men, one after the other, until they all perish. Old and new examples of this are before our eyes. For Christ, as Daniel says [Cap. 2, 34. 35. 45.], is the stone that fills the whole world; those who oppose it will be crushed to dust; and Christ himself says Luc. 20, 18: "Whosoever falls on this stone will be crushed, but on whom it falls it will crush him."

Even today it is nothing new that this is preached about Christ; the examples of the four monarchies are before our eyes, which we see lying in the dust because they stubbornly opposed this kingdom. On the other hand, the church, which has been severely afflicted by the world at all times, endures, grows, is joyful, praises God, extols His benefits, even though the devil and the world are raging and indignant; and this for the sake of this verse, because it sees here that this king of theirs has been appointed and decreed on Zion. From there, whoever wants to push him down, may do so; we rejoice and give thanks to God that all the schemes of the world and the devil are in vain. Therefore, trusting in this verse, we surely despise them and laugh.

But one must pay special attention at this point, firstly to the person who speaks, that is, God the Father; secondly to the person of whom the Father speaks; thirdly also to the place which the Holy Spirit calls.

Pay careful attention to these three things, and set them against everything that does not agree with these persons and this place, and despise it as if it were nothing. For if mau regard this verse aright, it fills heaven and earth in such a manner that apart from it nothing can be seen, however great and glorious it may be in the sight of the world. For who is it that says, "I"? Is it not the Lord of heaven and earth, who created all things out of nothing by the power of his word? With this compare the world and all the power of the world, what will it be, what will it be able to do against this Lord? Is not the world there through his speaking? Will not, when he says it, the world cease to exist and suddenly fall away? Now this Lord over all things, who alone is eternal, who alone is wise, who alone is just, who alone is almighty God, says: "I have appointed my King."

See also this person, who and how he is. The world also has its kings, who rule by divine authority, as Paul says [Rom. 13, 1. Vulg.]: "All authority is from God", and yet they are, as Peter calls them [1 Petr. 2, 13. Vulg.], "a human creature", that is, appointed by human order, and they are only commanded to care for external and physical things. But this King, our Lord JESUS CHRIST, is directly ordained by the eternal Father Himself to be a King, and He is called the Father's King, or the King appointed by the Father. "I," He says, "have appointed My King," He thus separates Him from all the kings of the world. For though GOD has also appointed the others, as Paul says, "All authority is from GOD," yet He does not call them His kings. Therefore this is a glorious, and very peculiar (eximius) king, whom the LORD and the eternal Father has appointed to be his king, and therefore the other kings rightly revere him, hold him in honor, accept him, and, as he says afterwards [v. 12.], kiss him as the one precious stone, in comparison with which all other kings and kingdoms are hardly bricks and dung.

But to what purpose does it serve that he designates the place and says that he is appointed king on the holy mountain Zion? But this is

It is to this that one must pay attention in the first place. For this reason, he has a bodily place in mind, so that we may firmly believe that this king, who is appointed by God, is a true man and, I say, a person who appears (personam personatam), who can be grasped, seen with the eyes, and touched with the hands. For one must not follow the foolish imagination of people who hide themselves in corners, perform certain bodily exercises, and wait until God speaks to them, imagining that everything they think or dream are prophecies and rays of the Holy Spirit. For this was also the folly of the monks. But if God had wanted to instruct us in this way, to speak to us and to enlighten us, He would not have indicated a certain person, but especially He would not have indicated a place on earth from which one should expect this king, where one should hear him. But now this person is indicated in the most certain way, firstly that he is the Son of God, secondly that he is king in Zion, that is, the son of David, the heir of David and the one promised to David, that he should be the king of the circumcised people over whom David ruled. Therefore, we are to accept this man, who teaches in Zion, reveals himself in Zion, that he is the king appointed by GOD. For though in thy name "Zion" is a synecdoche, for it denotes not stones and wood, but those who dwell in Zion, yet it is a bodily place, and teaches us that we are to accept this King who is called the King in Zion.

If Zion were to be taken as a matter of fact, it would be the end of us Gentiles, because we do not possess this mountain today, but the godless children of Hagar (Agareni --- the Turks) have it. But now our salvation and all comfort for us lies in the fact that we have, confess and accept this King, who was on the holy mountain Zion, that is, who was promised to David that he, as the angel says to Mary [Luc. 1, 32.st.], should be a king over the house of Jacob forever, and sit on the throne of his father David. Because the Father Himself made this promise to David, it is rightly said that he was appointed king by God on the throne of Jacob.

Mount Zion, on which David sat as king. This, then, is the title of our King, which is written on the crown with which the eternal Father has adorned him, that he should be king in Zion on the holy mountain Zion and in the city Jerusalem, our Lord Jesus Christ, who was born in the days of Mary the Virgin. All the prophets prophesy that he will be seated on Mount Zion as the son and heir of David. Thus Zechariah [Cap. 9:9] says, "O daughter of Zion, rejoice; behold, thy King cometh." And Isaiah [Cap. 2, 3.], "From Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." And Ps. 110, 2. "The LORD shall send the scepter of thy kingdom out of Zion." Isa. 59:20: "There shall come out of Zion a redeemer." Obadiah, v. 17.: "Out of Mount Zion shall be salvation."

These testimonies of the prophets lead us all to the fleshly Zion, that is, to the people and the seat of David, that we should expect that from there righteousness and a river of pure water will go forth. This comfort is finally given to us by the Holy Spirit in these troubles and hatreds of the devil and the world, as if to say: Thou little host, fear not, endure and suffer all wrongs, let the world be haughty in its riches and power, until the day of wrath come and subdue the impenitent. But the kingdom of my king will remain firm. For he is set up king by me, break from them; but as they have not set up this king, so shall they not put him down.

But why does he call Zion a holy mountain, since it was nothing but stones and wood, and the people who inhabited it flesh and blood, just like the people of other nations and cities? But would not this exalted title much more properly fit the mountain on which was the temple and the worship? I answer: I have often said that nothing is more difficult for us to believe than that we are holy. For the offences both of ourselves and of others, and the infirmities known to us, are offensive to us. Therefore, just as others cannot be persuaded that we are holy, so we ourselves do not dare to give ourselves this honor.

write. But this opinion that we and they are holy should not be withdrawn from other people or from ourselves, but as it is common in German to call someone a -good alumn, a good housemother, so it should be something acceptable to us in the church to call someone holy. But, as I have said, so our weakness, and weakness well known to us, moves us. For because we are flesh and blood, because we do not walk in the clouds, but occupy ourselves with the mean works of housekeeping and worldly government, these things -as it were- obscure holiness. Therefore, it is very useful that hearts be properly instructed on this seemingly easy question.

But Alan usually answers in this way: Mount Zion, or the people who lived in Zion, had a twofold holiness, or in two ways they were a holy people. First, because they had the word of God and the worship of God. By this word stones and wood and also the people themselves were sanctified, in such a way that if someone killed a Jew, he was said to have killed a holy person, not for the sake of the person himself, but for the sake of the place and the people, which was sanctified by the word of GOD, yes, by GOD Himself who dwelt there. Secondly, there was another holiness, and a greater holiness, for because GOD dwelt among this people through His Word, so in this people alone was the true Church, which is holy by faith, and nowhere else. For the saints knew that the Blessed Seed would come, and that the Son of God would become man and offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. In this faith they obtained forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit through the promised Seed, and were sanctified in truth; and for the sake of these truly sanctified ones, though few in number, the whole nation was thereafter called holy, because it was the only one in which holy people lived. This is a greater and truer holiness than that of which we spoke before.

Thus, with us, the fourth commandment, "Honor your father and mother," sanctifies these stands, so that I can

can rightly say: The father is holy, the mother is holy, the authorities are holy, namely according to a general holiness, because it is a divine commandment that we should obey them. But this is such a commandment that it unites not only One People, but all everywhere. Therefore this divine order goes over all nations. But after this, father and mother, likewise the rulers, who are Christians, have another holiness, which is not so general, but a special one, because they are baptized in the name of Jesus and sanctified by faith in the promise and by the Holy Spirit. In this way Mount Zion was a holy mountain, first of all by the legal holiness, because there was the word and the legal services; secondly also by the holiness by grace, because it had the promise of the forgiveness of sins by the future seed, which was then fulfilled and spread from there through the apostles into the whole world, but then also believed by the saints and, that I say so, taken possession of by faith.

But the right answer and the right opinion is this, that Mount Zion is called holy, not for its own sake, nor for the sake of the people, but for the sake of the king. For as it is a common saying among us that we call it a robber's castle where robbers dwell, a merchant's city where merchants live: so also Zion is called a holy mountain, not by David who dwelt thereon, but by Christ, who is so holy that he sanctifies them that believe on him, that is, that he forgives sins and gives the Holy Ghost. This is the holiness of this mountain, which he has from the King. Since this King remains, we will also remain, even if the Pope, the Turk and everything else that always hates or disputes this King should crumble, and we will not stop hoping in this King of ours until we see that he has fallen from his throne, on which God the Father has placed him. But we believe that this "I" who has established His King will not suffer the world to break what He has established, as the experience of all times proves. For the enemies

of this king have all fallen away, but he is unharmed and reigns.

Therefore learn, first, that this King is appointed by the Father; secondly, that he is to be waited for and found in the holy mountain of Zion. Therefore let us turn our eyes hither, and we shall not err; but the world shall err, which despiseth Zion, and stirreth up trouble against this King.

So far the prophet has taught us about the appointed and declared rebellious king, together with his rebellious doctrine. But I call him rebellious, not that he is to blame for it, but because the world, that is, the kings, peoples, lords, wise men, saints, clergy (religiosi) are angry with him and therefore begin to rage and stir up trouble. Although this prophecy is not at all cheerful, it is nevertheless necessary to fortify us, so that we do not become fainthearted when this happens, and we are accused with our king and his doctrine as if we were rebellious. For in this danger we have him as our defender and justifier who speaks here and says, "I have appointed my king."

This is our only consolation, to which we cling, yes, in which we stand and are even hopeful, putting par excellence out of sight, and not caring about all kings and lords, all heathens and people, with all their power and strength. For this "I" is stronger, mightier, wiser than all these. Therefore he will preserve his king against the raging of the world; if he is preserved, we who are his subjects will also be preserved. Thus we must hold fast to the invisible things which this psalm shows us, and put the visible things out of sight. But now the prophet continues, and after he has described the place or the seat of this king, he also indicates his office, so that one may know not only where he is, but also what is to be expected from him, what he will do.

V. 7. I will preach of such a way that the Lord has said to me: You are my son, today I have begotten you.

These words are common and well known in all churches and monasteries, but by no means understood in such a way that they weigh so heavily and

so great things in themselves. For, to say many things in a few words, here the whole law is taken away, and the ministry of Christ is described in the purest way, that he will not wield the sword, not set up a new world regime, but will be a teacher, who is to instruct men about an unheard-of, but eternal decision of God.

Although other kings also give laws and rule by laws, their main office is not to teach or to give laws, but to punish the wicked with the sword and to defend the good. They are therefore, as it were, executioners and caning masters of God. For so Paul says [Rom. 13, 4.] that they bear the sword to the wicked for terror and vengeance. Therefore their real office is not teaching, because they do not rule the consciences, not the hearts, but only keep the hands in check, and as a swineherd rules the swine and feeds them simply according to the five senses, so the kings of the world are shepherds, who rule not the consciences, but the bodies, like cattle. But our King, of whom the Holy Spirit prophesies here, is such a King, who is ordained and appointed by God, the eternal Father, to teach. He is therefore at the same time also a priest, teacher, theologian, who is to instruct and instruct his own about God, and only the consciences rule.

This is the difference that distinguishes our king from all other kings, and one must be extremely careful about it. For this is the devil's constant care and untiring purpose, that he should mix this kingdom with the kingdoms of the world, and make of Christ, who is a teacher of consciences, a worldly king; and the pope, a peculiar instrument of the devil, has utterly cast away Christ, inasmuch as he is a teacher, and taken up the sword; yea, even the keys which Christ gave to the church, he has perverted to worldly purposes. In the same way, the spirits or sectarians are seduced by the same thoughts and seize the world's reign. For they do away with the former regiments and establish new customs and new practices. This, they think, is the noblest fruit of the Gospel. I myself have heard that Zwingli in Marburg, with great

Hochmuth publicly said that he had taken off the red hats that the Swiss had used for a while as men of war when they were at war. Carlstadt was no more understanding when he said that it would be a good thing if he left school and his studies and no longer called himself a doctor, but a new layman. For so he wrote on the titles of his books, 1) he was a new layman. But these inconsistencies arise from another ignorance, namely the ignorance of the kingdom of Christ. Because they do not distinguish between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of the world, they put Christianity in a change of some external things.

But Christ leaves these things to the kings of the world, but to his own he says [Luc. 22:26], "But not so ye." For his kingdom is in word, and his office is to teach; to the kings of the world he leaves the care of swine. For these are provided with the stick with which they can drive the cattle, but his office is, as the Psalm speaks here, that he preaches and tells of God's counsel (decreto). This is a very clear description of the kingdom of Christ and the real difference, but truly few grasp it. The harmful confusion of the two kingdoms constantly clings to the hearts, to such an extent that it is difficult even for the spiritually minded to distinguish this kingdom from the kingdom of the world. But those who firmly believe that after this life there is another life, that they need the service of kings and authorities in this life, but they use this King, Christ, for another and eternal life.

The change of persons should not disturb the reader, for it is very common in Hebrew, as when they say, "Long live my lord the king," they mean nothing else than: Thou king shalt live. So in this place, if the change of person is removed, the understanding will be easier: I have set my king on my holy mountain Zion, that he may preach my counsel,

that he is my son, whom I have begotten this day. But the holy scripture sticks to its way, to which one must get used, although this sometimes makes the sense a little darker, as in the 91st Psalm, v. 9: "The Lord is his confidence, you have made the Most High your refuge." The sense would be clearer if the second person had also been used in the first place: the LORD is thy confidence, thou hast made the Most High thy refuge. And yet to him who considers it- well, this change of person will not seem altogether useless. For how much more weighty is it in this place that he introduces the king himself preaching about God's counsel! For, as I have said, his main purpose is to show that this king is also a teacher. Then, without a doubt, the Holy Spirit also intends to teach us that God does everything through the Son. For when the Son preaches the commandment, the Father Himself also preaches, who is in the Son, but one with the Son; and when we preach of this counsel, Christ Himself preaches, as He says [Luc. 10:16], "He that heareth you heareth Me."

But this is very fitting that here it is described that the king will speak or preach orally. For this passage is definitely to be understood of oral preaching, and not of spiritual. That he said above [v. 6.], "I have appointed my King," this verse God sings to himself and to his Son; but to us our King sings, "I will preach." For he is a public teacher, sent to preach, as he says Matt. 11:5, "To the poor the gospel is preached." This office he has, if one does not believe that he is a worldly prince. For he does not bring the sword, but the word. This is the scepter of this king, therefore receive him as a guide of the conscience, as a priest and teacher; and this is also the cause that the other kings set themselves against him. For if he were silent, if this king did not preach, the world would be quiet. But this preaching arouses the whole world and brings them to arms.

The word statutum (XX) has a very broad meaning and usually denotes a ceremony, "a way, custom". For in general

1) Compare Walch, St. Louis Edition, vol. XX, Einl., p. 18d.

it agrees with the German word "Recht". For this is also used in a very broad sense, as when we say "country right, city right, father right, daughter right" 2c. Now in this place it denotes a new way of teaching. For since Moses prescribed many ceremonies, and the kings of the earth also have their laws and statutes, this king comes with a new way that is different from all the regulations of Moses and the other kings. But this must be taken to mean that he will abolish all laws, even Mosiah's, because they are of no use in attaining eternal blessedness. For when it comes to eternal life, forgiveness of sins, death, and in short, everything that concerns the conscience, Moses is to be silent, the laws and all kings are to be silent, but this teacher and king alone is to be heard, of whom it is promised here that he will preach.

But here consider carefully the circumstances of the time. For when this prophecy was written by David through the Holy Spirit, the law was in force and the Mosaic priesthood was in its highest bloom. If this king should not bring a different teaching than Moses, this promise would be in vain. For the law of Moses already existed at that time. Again, if this king will preach something different, as this very promise clearly entails, then it is to be asked what could be taught more gloriously than that which Moses taught, who brought the holy ten commandments, the highest and truly divine wisdom, which teaches us about the highest and holiest works? For what is there greater than that which the first commandment teaches of trusting in GOD and loving GOD? And not less is that which follows of the right use of the divine name, of the right invocation, of thanksgiving, of the diligent occupation with the word. For of the teaching of the second tablet, since it is much less, I ask nothing here. These are the highest works and the highest divine services, which Moses indeed indicated, but which are commanded and written by the divine wisdom itself. Therefore, the holy ten commandments are, as far as doing is concerned (*de facto*), the highest teaching, to which nothing in the whole world is equal.

Now the question is, what kind of teaching is this, of which it is promised here that it shall be spread by Christ? For this conclusion is clear: since during the time when the law and the priesthood existed, a teacher is promised who is to teach the church, it follows that he will bring a different teaching than that of the Mosis, the Levites, the priests, and the prophets, who were there at the time when this promise was written, and who governed and taught the church. For that he promises this teacher is as much as if he said, "Hitherto you have had no king for a teacher, who taught this commandment, which this my king will teach. You have had teachers, but not the right ones, not the ones that would be sufficient, so you should expect this teacher of mine, who will not teach like Moses; for what would it serve to promise you what you already have in your hands? but he will bring a different, greater, better, more useful and holier teaching.

But what is this teaching? What is this "way"? Certainly this: "The Lord has said to me, You are my Son." A splendid interpreter of this verse is St. Paul in the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans [Cap. 1, 1-4.], where he says: "God promised long before through His prophets in the holy Scriptures the gospel of His Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and powerfully proved to be a Son of God according to the Spirit, sanctifying since the time He rose from the dead." 2c. This is the new teaching, which, as the Psalm says here, is to be spread in the world through the Son of God. The old teaching is that of Moses: fear GOD, trust in GOD, love GOD and your neighbor as yourself; but this is far more excellent. For it does not teach what we should do; that is the law's actual office; it demands certain works from us and threatens the wrath of God if we do not perform them. Therefore, it does nothing but frighten, threaten, and afflict us and does not let us rest. Because it is impossible for us to perform what it demands from us. This king is not such a teacher; he does not demand of us our works, but gives us his own; he does not teach us who we are, because that is what the law does, but he teaches us who we are.

who he is, so that we may accept him and enjoy his gifts, even though we have not done what Moses requires.

The teaching of this king is therefore different from all other teachings, even from the law, which is the most perfect teaching when it comes to works, or what we should do. But the doctrine of this King teaches not of works, but of the Person, to whom the Lord said, "Thou art my Son." A short teaching, purely and simply presented, without prolixity, without circumstance. But if one considers these few words, further explanations present themselves quite naturally, as indicated by the Gospel, which portrays this person more clearly and teaches that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin mother Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, died, and was raised again from death by his own power; that he sits at the right hand of the Father, and that it was commanded from heaven that we should hear him, that we should fix our eyes on him alone, as the Jews in the wilderness fixed their eyes on the bronze serpent, and not depart from his words; but that whatever he speaks and does, we should firmly believe that it is all for our salvation. For the gospel deals with this everywhere, which is why it so diligently shows us both the miraculous works and the preaching of Christ, in order to praise him to us, to invite us to accept him, to follow him, and to pay attention to him. For if we do this, we will not go astray anywhere, but will keep the right way to salvation.

This is a loftier and more excellent teaching than the law, which only has to do with teaching what we should do. The gospel, however, does not throw away the law, for even the law is God's voice, which all must obey, but even though the law remains, the gospel teaches something higher. For since no one can obey the law, it preaches about the Son of God, whom the Father begot "today," that is, from eternity, and appointed him as a king on Zion, that is, he willed that he should be born man and teach. Here the hearts are necessarily stimulated to voluntarily accept this so great king.

and to pay attention to his works. Therefore, this is the highest article of our faith, to know that the Son of Mary is the eternal Son of God, sent by the Father to preach, not to fight. For he has his power in his mouth, not the sword in his hand. And the epitome of his teaching is this, that he says: GOD, the eternal Father, has begotten me forever. This is the main point of our faith and the highest article of the Gospel, which is why the devil has so seriously opposed it through Arius and his godless descendants.

And even now the devil does not cease to make this article unstable through our hearts. For from where do the terrors, the tears, the sighs, the lamentations of the godly arise, but because this article is not yet firm enough in our hearts? For if we were certain that this Jesus was the Son of God, what would we fear? For it is certain that he is on our side and that he is sent to us by the Father. Now, we wretched people are challenged by sins, we fear death, we fear damnation only for the sake of it, because the conscience doubts whether Christ is the Son of God. For if we believed this for certain, we would despise sin as if it were nothing, we would laugh at death and the devil as downcast and defenseless enemies. For what are sins, death and the devil against the Son of God? But that we do not believe this is a defect, not in the teacher or his words, but in us, who are either totally unbelieving or weak in faith. This, then, is the teaching of our King, that he preaches that the eternal God has said from eternity, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you." But you see that nothing is said here about our things or works, for that is what the law does, but that only this Son of God is held up to us with his words and deeds.

But let us now compare this with each other. The Psalm calls him a king in the previous verse and says explicitly that he was appointed king in Zion. Therefore, it follows in a good and certain conclusion that he is a man, for how could he be a king?

Otherwise, could he be king in a physical place? This is also the reason why he says that he was appointed king by God. But it is not for God to appoint him, but for him to appoint, for he is the Creator; but this king is appointed, therefore he is a man, a creature. This proves the appointment and the anointing and the bodily place, that he is a true, visible and tangible man, who also teaches with a human voice. Also, people never had any doubt about this, and no faith was necessary for this. For they saw with their eyes that he was a man, having flesh, bone, and blood, and that which belongs not to God, but to a man, and even to a creature. But is it enough to know this about this king? It is by no means enough, but he is also the Son of God, begotten from eternity. This could not be seen with eyes, therefore the king himself teaches this, and faith is necessary.

But in order that the text may not be distorted, the words must be well considered: "You are my Son, today I have begotten you." God is outside of time, he is a spiritual being, therefore he cannot beget of himself anything temporal, nothing corporeal, but he begets that which is like him, that is, which is eternal and spiritual. But because he says these words to the person who is appointed in Zion to be a king in a bodily and visible place, what follows? Is it not this, that this person, born in time of the Virgin Mary, was present before he was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the body of Mary, and that from everlasting? For "today", as we will say hereafter, has no beginning with God, nor does it have an end. Thus, the present text unites in this person the Godhead and humanity, that they are one, so that one can rightly say: This person is GOtt.

This doctrine, which is presented to us in this psalm, let us hold fast against the tongues of the devil, which have presumed to make this article unstable, even against the foolishness of our reason. For when foolish men begin to dispute about the perfection of the divine majesty, they fall and tumble, as

Lucifer from heaven, in blasphemies. For what can we wretched people even think of such great things after we have departed from the Word? Rather, we follow this Psalm, which has stood firm and unharmed against all heresies for three thousand years, and clearly and roundly states that this King is both man and eternal God. We also want to agree with this description, and everything that we hear or think that deviates from this description, we want to curse and condemn as being exaggerated, blasphemous and conceived by the devil.

The godless Arius allowed the name of the Son of God, but thereby he kept and defended the blasphemous doctrine that we are also God's children in the same way. How much more correctly Paul said that we are adopted children [Gal. 4, 5. Eph. 1, 5.], but this one is by nature the Son, and therefore calls Him or the image of the invisible God [Col. 1, 15^A]. Further, how appropriately, how powerfully does the epistle to the Hebrews use the testimony of this Psalm, when it says [Heb. 1, 5.], "To what angel did God ever say, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" For it also exalts this king above the nature (*naturam*) of the angels, which after all takes the first place among the creatures; and rightly so, for by the Son of GOD the angels and the archangels were created. And Paul therefore calls the Son Col. 1, 15.

πρωτότοχον πάσης χτίσεως, the

Firstborn before all creatures, that he might set him apart and above the angels and all other creatures.

In this simplicity we should live, and not go to the deep and exceedingly wide sea, that we would dispute about such great things. For this article is very slippery, first because of its subtlety (*subtilitatem*), but then also because of our weakness. It is therefore a complete folly and a very dangerous undertaking if one wants to investigate these things more closely. For if we could do this, we would not need the Scriptures as a guide; indeed, even this teacher and king would not be necessary to us. But those who do not care about the Scriptures and, trusting in their sharpness, do not need them.

The people who go to such great things are masters of God and not disciples; therefore, like Phaeton who wanted to rule the sun, they are overthrown and fall.

God complains about this presumption when He says in the prophet [Is. 46:5], "To whom do you compare Me?" For this is peculiar to all heretics, hypocrites and enthusiasts, that they invent an image of GOD for themselves. A monk confesses with his mouth that he believes that Christ is the Son of God, but he imputes something to this Son of God according to his will, and thinks that he means the cap and the peculiar way of living, and that in return he will be given eternal life. But, O hypocrite, who commanded you to make such a nose for the Son of God, that I should say so? Who made you certain that God would have such a thing from you? Therefore, if a monk lives according to his rule in the holiest way, he is no more understanding or better than Arius, who said that God is only one (*unus*), but Christ is called the Son of God, because he is the most perfect and first creature, through whom all other creatures are made. For if Christ is the Son of God, and we are to be satisfied only with the fact that God has sent Him as Savior, why do we depend on the fact that He is the Son of God? Why does a monk put such trust in his work, which he himself has chosen? This evil comes from the fact that the heart abandons the word or does not respect it, and makes its own thoughts about God. For all those who deal with their own thoughts (*speculator*) are formers, and form what in truth is not, for they follow their reason, whereas in these things one must only follow the word; for reason can neither comprehend such great things by itself, nor defeat or overcome its thoughts.

Such people, who followed their own thoughts (*speculatores*), were Zwingli and Carlstadt. For after they had departed from the word which says that the bread is the body of Christ and the wine the blood of Christ, they had to invent something else. This their child (*foetum*) or thought they cherished as a mother cherishes her child, and all that they subsequently read in the Fathers, of which they thought it to be

served their cause. But the sanctuary must be treated with greater reverence. This king, who has the office of a teacher, should have been heard, his word should have been kept, but not a delusion sought, which is foreign to his word, or is not in accord with it as it is. For although Christ says of the bread, "This is my body," they say: This bread is nothing but bread, and although he says of the cup that it is the blood of the New Testament, they maintain that the wine is only wine and signifies, but is not this blood. Who is so blind that he should not see that this is contrary to one another? And yet some people raise these enthusiasts even to heaven.

As for the present passage, we are to believe and confess with this Psalm that Christ, who is Teacher in Zion and King, is the Son of God, born from eternity of the Father, above, apart from, and before all creatures. He is therefore not a creature after this birth; as Athanasius rightly says, begotten, not created. If here your reason objects to you, and thoughts arise such as the Turks have: Are there then two Gods? say thou, No, there is but One God; yet is the Father, and is the Son. How so: Answer humbly: I do not know. For God did not want this to be seen with the eyes; He only presented it in words and wanted it to be believed. If we do this, we do not err. For we follow the light which God Himself has kindled; but our reason is blind and cannot see such great things.

Here again the persons are changed. For he could have said: I am the Son of God; but the Father is introduced speaking. But this is done for the sake of drawing everything to the Father as the author, as Christ is wont to do in his sermons. Everywhere he introduces the image of the Father; he says that he speaks by command of the Father. He says that the Father does what he himself does; he does not say that he does anything of his own will, but by the command of the Father, so that through Christ all may know the Father, believe in the Father and praise the Father. This is a peculiar way of this teacher, which the Holy Spirit wanted to indicate in this passage, because

He attributes this word to the Father and yet shows that this King is the Teacher. For he wants to lead us to the Father through Christ, just as Christ does. But this also serves to comfort the hearts. For the conscience also grows pale and fears the name of God. For it recognizes its sins and fears His wrath. Therefore it abhors the voice of God and would rather hear the Turk or the devil, as this attitude is beautifully depicted in the history of the legislation, where the people exclaim: "Do not let God speak to us, otherwise we would die; speak to us. For just as the majesty of God cannot be seen with human eyes, so our ears cannot bear His voice.

Christ sees this, therefore, whatever he speaks and does, he always refers to God the Father, in order to bring this terror out of our hearts, and to remove this sad picture, which we ourselves invent, from our eyes. For what is there in Christ that is not full of comfort, lovable and kind? Therefore, when you see him hanging on the cross, when you see him overflowing with blood, and attribute this to God's will according to his words, will not the most terrifying name of God become sweet to you? and you will not only fear nothing evil from God, who sent his Son for this purpose, but also be filled with certain hope in his mercy and love towards you and the whole human race. To this end, what the Holy Spirit says is useful and helpful. The Holy Spirit attributes this word to the Father: "You are my Son." Christ Himself everywhere attributes the image and will of the Father, not for His sake, as if it were necessary for Him to speak in this way, but for the sake of our conscience, so that we may be sure that we have a mediator who stands between us and God, who represents us as our mediator, who loves us, who dies for us according to the will of His eternal Father.

This way of teaching is new and unknown to the world and completely hidden from the wicked, but it is known to the godly. These hear this teacher in Zion with the greatest willingness.

He is the Son of God, who, although he himself teaches, nevertheless teaches us the word which the Father speaks. "The Lord," he says, "has said to me, 'You are my son,' as if to say: 'My doctrine is not mine; I only tell and declare that which is spoken to me.' Therefore he that heareth me heareth the Father. For though I preach, yet it is not I that preach, but it is One Word which I speak, and the Father heareth 2c. It is useful to learn this, so that we do not think that the Father is differently disposed towards us than we hear from the Son, who truly, because he dies for us, cannot hate us. Think the same of the Father and believe it. For Christ's voice is the voice of the invisible Father. For the Son speaks from the mouth of the Father, and again the Father from the mouth of the Son, for the Father and the Son are One [John 10:30]. In this way, although the persons are different (that is, the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father), the will is the same and the word is the same.

But this also serves that we do not want to turn away from Christ with our thoughts, do not want to seek, hear and call upon the Father, but, as Christ says to Philip (Jn. 14:9-11), we should certainly think that when we look at, hear, call upon and worship Christ, we look at, hear, call upon and worship God the Father. Therefore, we should cling to this teacher and not let ourselves be drawn away from his words. For what you hear from him, you hear from the eternal and invisible Father, and there is no other God to be sought apart from Christ, nor any other will of God. Therefore, those who indulge in their thoughts and speculate (*speculantur*) about God and His will without Christ lose God altogether. Therefore, what the Holy Spirit says here, "The LORD has said to me," is to be understood of the true Godhead, as the epistle to the Hebrews (Cap. 1, 5) uses this testimony.

Teachers have disputed in many ways about the phrase: "Today I have begotten you". For some interpret it from the birth of Christ, others from the resurrection and the time of the New Testament, but we want to keep it as it reads ($\epsilon\gamma\gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\tau\epsilon$), or

after the letter. Because the Hebrew word actually means "to beget". This cannot be understood at this point from natural or temporal birth (for it is not spoken in reference to men, but about GOD), therefore it denotes the eternal and invisible birth. Therefore, it is such a word that cannot be understood or comprehended by human reason. The Son proclaims it to us, but if we do not believe it, we will never understand it. For it is a word which is brought to us out of the light, since no one can come to it, in which God dwells. Then it can be understood when it is spoken among men by men, but here, since the eternal Father, who is a Spirit, speaks this word from His Son, it cannot be understood. But you see in this passage a twofold preaching. The first is an inward one, as the Lord speaks to the Son. We neither hear it nor understand it, but it is only understood by the one who speaks it and by the one to whom it is said. The other sermon is an outward one, as the Son speaks to us, "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son." This we hear, but we do not understand it either, for it wants to be grasped and can be grasped with faith alone. I therefore understand this passage of the eternal begetting.

I do not dislike Augustine's discussion, since he compares the verbum that stands in the past time with the adverbium of the present time, and says that in the sight of God there is neither past nor future, but outside of time and in eternity everything is present. And yet the Holy Spirit wanted to use the past time to indicate the perfect birth, otherwise, if we want to speak as the matter is, the Son of God is born today, daily and always. For eternity has neither past nor future. In this way, the word "today" must be understood of time, namely as it is before GOD, not of our time. For GOD does not speak to us, but to Him who is with GOD apart from time. We have the difference of the times, that with us "today" something an-

is different from yesterday and tomorrow. This difference does not know eternity, where there is no time, neither past nor future, but a constant today, as Peter says [2. Ep. 3, 8.]: "One day before the Lord is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like One day." For the beginning, the end and the middle of time are One Moment with God.

We speak these words like parrots without understanding. For we are temporal, or, that I speak more correctly. A small piece of time. For what we have been is gone, but what is to come we do not have. Thus we have nothing of time but something that is only a moment, that which is present. So the adverb "today" refers to the eternal birth of the Son, which clearly proves that he is not a creature, since he is born "today", that is, in eternity, without beginning and without end, in a completely present (praesentissima, that I say so) birth. But I have said above [Col. 130]: if one compares these with each other, that this Son is born from eternity, and yet is King in Zion, then it follows that his birth is a twofold one, outside of time and in time, and that this person, who is born of the Virgin Mary, is at the same time true man and true God. But how this happened or could have happened, to discuss this in more detail (disputes), beware of that. Follow the word in simple faith, which teaches us about these things, and flee the disputes. For this is not a fiction of men, that of this man born of Mary it is said that he is God, that he is begotten of the Father from eternity; the Scripture alone teaches us this. Therefore, we are to believe it as an article that has been taught and revealed to us by God without our doing, and we are not to measure such great things by our begging rod, since we have only a brief moment of time, but do not even understand eternity.

You have therefore the most important articles of our faith, indicated in this Psalm, who and how the King Christ is, namely, begotten of the Father from eternity, and set up on Mount Zion; then, how His kingdom is, namely, that He is a

1) Erlanger: visibittzm instead of: invisibilera.

Teacher be beyond the Law and Moses. For he teaches not of our works, but of himself, that he is the eternal Son of God, that he may provoke us to accept him, and to trust in his merits and works. Whoever accepts and believes these, this King will soon reveal Himself further to him through His words and deeds. You will not despise or neglect his word, for you know that he is the Son of God; you will also look at his deeds and hear with the greatest pleasure that he became man, that he suffered death on the cross, that he raised himself from death. For you will firmly believe that this was not done for his sake, since he lacked nothing because he is the Son of God, but for your sake, so that you might be free from death, from sin, from the snares and tyranny of the devil. So you will trust in this King and will certainly believe that you will attain eternal life. All this will follow if you will firmly keep this article that Christ is God's eternal Son.

But those who do not hold to this article will either, like the Turks, when they exalt Christ, judge that he is a prophet; or, like the pope, they will not esteem his works and words highly, but will seek other help through which they hope for forgiveness of sins and eternal life. For these also know that he was born of Mary and suffered under Pontius Pilate, but all this is to them only a historical event; they are not stirred to faith, they do not thereby grasp a certain hope of blessedness, but as they read the histories of the kings of Judah or Israel, so they also know this of Christ. For it cannot be otherwise. The whole gospel only becomes a history when one has lost this main article of the eternal birth of Christ. For everything is based on this. Therefore, for those who hold on to this, the words and deeds of Christ are not dead history, but living things, which are held up to us for this reason by the Son of God, so that we may live through them.

Therefore, mark this verse with the utmost diligence: "You are my Son, today I have begotten you." They are few words, but

They have a tremendous weight and cannot be comprehended by reason. For when reason is outside of time and temporal things, it is completely blind and dull, for it sees and knows nothing. Therefore faith is necessary, but reason, as Paul commands of the women in the church [1 Cor. 14:34, 1 Tim. 2:12], should speak nothing but be silent. But as the Holy Spirit has taught us about this King by what precedes (*a priori*), or (if it should be permissible to speak so) from the effectual cause (*ab efficienti causa*), that he was begotten of the Father from eternity, so he will now continue to describe him according to what follows (*a posteriori*), and will show by the effects that this King is not only man, but also God.

V. 8: "Cry unto me, and I will give thee the heathen for an inheritance, and the end of the world for a possession.

This is to be referred to the description of the kingdom and the person at the same time. Arius has also claimed this passage for himself against the deity [of Christ^Λ]. He says: If Christ is God by nature, then he is already the Lord of the Gentiles and of the world to its end. But here he claims as a lesser of GOD, and receives what he had not before; so he is not GOD, but the most perfect creature, hence he also has the name and is called a son of GOD. Thus the perceptive minds become a workshop of the devil when they allow themselves to be led astray from the word and rely on their intellect. Yes rather we turn the whole proof around, and conclude thus: The Son is here set as Lord over the end of the race, that is, over all creatures, so it follows that he is God by nature. For the Lord says thus: "I will leave my glory to no other" [Is. 48, 11]. But to this he gives his honor, so he does not give it to a stranger, but to him who is his equal, that is, to God. And yet the difference of persons remains, for there is one who gives, but another demands that it be given, indeed, he is commanded to demand. But why this? If he is God, why does he take himself

not what is his? What is it necessary for him to demand?

I answer: The Psalm speaks of the Son of God, not as he was from eternity, for after this manner he is the Lord of the creature; he receives nothing, but has everything; but it speaks of the King of Zion, that is, of the Son of God who became man, of the man born of the Virgin Mary, and begins his kingdom in the fleshly Zion, through the Gospel. To this man, who is humbled among the angels, God gives dominion over the Gentiles, that all should obey him, that all should hope for forgiveness of sins and eternal life through him, and the Son is commanded to demand this dominion, so that his reverence for the Father and his unspeakable humility may be shown everywhere. He does not force himself, he does not seize it of his own will, but remains in the humiliation of the cross, as he says [Matth. 11, 29]: "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble in heart", and waits until the Father exalts him. This, then, is a Johannine way of speaking, that is, Christ's own, for this is the way He used to speak [John 14:28]: "The Father is greater than I." [v. 24. "The words that I speak are not mine." [Jn. 5, 17.:] "My Father worketh, and I also work." For everywhere he is wont to cite the Father as the author, and to ascribe all that is his to the Father, not only to terrify the ungodly, but also to comfort the godly, as we said just before.

Therefore, learn to use this verse against the Arians. Christ receives dominion over the Gentiles, but he receives it in such a way that he himself is the Lord, that through him the Gentiles should receive righteousness and judgment, grace and truth, as the 89th Psalm, v. 15, testifies. These are things that are not even in the hands of angels, but only God forgives sins and makes righteous, only God delivers from death and eternal damnation, only God gives the Holy Spirit, also only God is true. Since the Son is commanded to pour this out to the Gentiles, who does not see that he is God by nature? For

these are not works of the creature, and yet this person, to whom this is given by God the Father Himself, is the seed of David, and he holds the throne of his father David. Therefore, just as the word "I will give" is full of anguish to the Arians, so it is full of comfort to us. For since the Son of God appeared in our flesh as the seed of David, this word belongs to the proof of which St. Paul speaks Rom. 1:4, that he was powerfully proven to be the only begotten Son of God, who has everything from the Father.

In this way the word "heischen" does not give us an offence, but it edifies us, and teaches that we should not, after the manner of the Gentiles, Turks and Jews, when we want to ask something, run without reverence to God as to an unknown Lord, but go to the Son, the mediator between us and God, to whom the Father has given all things, as Christ says, citing as it were this very passage of the Psalm [Matth. 28, 18.]: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." Thus we shall obtain what we desire, and our hearts will not be in doubt, as the hearts of the Turks and the Jews necessarily doubt, since they call upon Him whom they do not know. But we know Christ, who is proved to be the Son of God, since authority over the Gentiles was given to him. Therefore, by praying in his name, we obtain all that we ask. This is what I wanted to say at the beginning against the pernicious doctrine of the Arians in a few words, in order to strengthen the highest article of our faith; now let us explain the words.

This king was installed on the throne of his father David in Zion. There, in the people of David, he began his kingdom, not with the sword, like David, but only with words, because he is a preacher. But the kingdom that began in Zion and in David's people does not end there, but the borders of this kingdom will be extended over all the nations and to the end of the world, that is, the kingdom that began in Jerusalem, the word that was first preached in Zion, will be extended over the whole earth, as the 19th Psalm, v. 4 f., says: "There is no language nor speech that can be spoken.

do not hear their voice. Their cord goes out into all the earth, and their speech to the end of the world. Therefore, the preceding verse is to be connected with this one, so that because Christ is praised as the Lord and King of the whole world, one does not fall into the foolishness of thinking that all worldly kingdoms are for that reason either not lawful rulers or a robbery, as some people speak of it quite inconsistently. For the preceding verse says that this king is a teacher, therefore he will not destroy the worldly regiments, will not change the civil laws, will not usurp kingdoms. These will remain in the same position they had before in the world, that is, the kings and princes who execute their office will be blessed, but those who administer their office carelessly will suffer punishment.

This king will not change this course or order of the world. For his kingdom is not of this world, but to all kingdoms and to all dominions he will bring the new word and the new doctrine, which testifies of him, that all who believe in him and are baptized shall have forgiveness of sins and eternal life. This is the kingdom of this king, this is his dominion, this is his emperorship. Therefore, those who do not believe in him, who do not accept him, will be punished with eternal death, and cannot work their way out of sins, nor escape the punishment of sin.

But this kingdom of our king, this doctrine of his, is the cause of the troubles of which this psalm spoke in the beginning. For the heathen rage, the people talk, the kings rebel, the lords conspire, only for the sake that they may reject this king and his doctrine by which he rules; and for this cause the heathen and the people are armed not only with reason and wisdom, but also with free will, by which they fashion themselves into an honorable and seemingly holy life. For if this were not to some extent within the powers of man, what would discipline, what would laws avail? But that some let their lusts be kept in check by the bonds of the laws, while others, like raging dogs, attack the

Who does not see that this is the work of human reason, which it can accomplish by itself, even without the Holy Spirit?

Now with these gifts, namely the light of reason and the freedom of the will, the pagans puff themselves up and wish that this king be suppressed, who at the same time condemns and rejects the light of reason and the freedom of the will as things that are not useful for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. For this king teaches that the forgiveness of sins and eternal life can only be obtained through his death and merits, and that this power was given to him by the Father. Furthermore, he wants people to use the light of reason and their discretion or free will to govern the things of this world and to prove themselves honorable in the outer life. For reason and the will serve for these two things. But this seems to be something too small for the heathen, and they want to be saved by these natural gifts. Since Christ condemns this, they cause trouble and condemn this teacher or king with his teaching.

How then, you will say, is Christ a king of the Gentiles, since the Gentiles will not have him and condemn him, since they make outrages against him? I answer: If the Gentiles, who reject Christ, would do this for their benefit, then the King Christ would certainly suffer harm; but the Gentiles reject Christ to them to the highest danger and to their very certain ruin. Therefore, Christ's kingdom is not harmed in this way, but the unbelieving world harms itself and brings condemnation upon itself. Therefore, this verdict remains: The Lord has given Christ dominion over all Gentiles, therefore he calls all Gentiles to faith through his gospel. Those who hear the gospel and obey it receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life. But those who do not believe remain in sins and cannot get out of sins either by the power of reason or by the powers of free will. Therefore, they do not harm the kingdom

Christ, whom they oppose, but themselves.

Therefore, this verse does not only serve to show that the law of Moses should be abolished, since the new kingdom instituted by Christ should also be brought to the Gentiles, but that everything should be abolished that can be arranged by the reason and the will of man, because it is of no use for salvation and eternal life. Therefore, not good discipline, not other virtues that can be devised by the will, not works that one takes upon oneself, no matter how difficult they may be, deserve the forgiveness of sins, nor do they reconcile us to God, but only faith in the Son of God. But, as I have said, this doctrine is the cause of unrest and turmoil in the world. For why are we condemned today, but because we say that this King alone is our righteousness? because we claim that by believing in him alone one obtains forgiveness of sins and eternal life? But the raging of the world shall not move us. For we know from this Psalm that to our King was given dominion over all the Gentiles, that they might be his own, that is, that through him they might be saved and receive forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit. But those who will not acknowledge him will be judged differently later.

Therefore the word "heathen" is not to be taken merely for what it means outwardly (*pro materia*), but it includes all that the heathen have, righteousness, wisdom, power, laws, and other things by which they believe themselves to be secure both against misfortune in civil life and against eternal evil. Look at the Roman Empire, which was gloriously fortified not only by power but also by laws; in it you will find excellent men, whose virtue is exalted in the Scriptures to the heavens. These the world admires and praises, and especially the hearts are taken by their zeal for the worship of God. But what does this psalm say? "Cry unto me, and I will give thee the heathen," that is, the Roman empire will not be helped by its power, not by its laws, not by its virtue, not by its worship; it will not be helped by the power, not by its laws, not by its virtue, not by its worship.

are yours and given to you, that is, if they believe in you, they will please me and be in grace, but if not, I will reject them and destroy them, and they will not be able to protect themselves. Therefore, this verse serves to comfort us against the sorrow of the cross. For, as the psalm said in the beginning, the heathen rage, the people rage, the kings rebel, the lords take counsel, and this does not happen without dangers for the church and certain disadvantages. But here we are to hold firmly to the fact that Christ demanded dominion over the Gentiles and that it was given to him by God the Father. Therefore, even if the world is nonsensical, even if the devil rages with all hell, they will still not get the upper hand. For Christ's kingdom exists and will exist, and he will reign in the midst of his enemies.

In this way we should also rise up in a special (*privata*) fight, when the hearts are frightened by the law, by sin, by death. Then we are to take hold of this verse: "I will give you the Gentiles as your own, and the end of the world as your inheritance," that is, we are to hold that Christ is set over all things by the power (*auctoritate*) of the Father, so that salvation depends on him alone. Since we have been baptized into his death, since we call on his name, since we rely on his word, we are to firmly believe that the victory will be ours, and that through him we will rule over death and hell. For God the Father does not preach here about garlic or onions; he gives everything into his hands to the Son, so that those who believe in him may be saved through him, but those who do not believe will be lost and condemned. Therefore, let not the world, let not the devil, let not our hearts terrify us. We are indeed afflicted and oppressed in many ways, but on this very path the Son of God has gone before us. He, too, felt the raging of the heathen and the threats and plots of the kings, but finally he proved to be a king over all nations on earth and as the ruler for the blessedness of the believers and the condemnation of the unbelievers.

There is therefore a glorious consolation here before-

held for the believers, that we have him for our Lord, who is the Lord over all the earth, whom the kings and all the Gentiles, even the devil himself, must serve and obey, or perish and perish. If you look at the matter, there is nothing like this before your eyes, and yet the outcome shows that the Holy Spirit is telling the truth. See what Christ's kingdom was like in the time of the apostles. Few, and that the most despised and the yeast of the people, it was who preached this king and denounced him to the world. The synagogue, on the other hand, was resplendent in dignity and power, and opposed these new teachers with all its might. Finally, there was the Roman Empire, which shed the blood of many thousands of martyrs to suppress this king, and it did not seem at that time that Christ had dominion over the Gentiles. The Gentiles seemed to rule, not only over the apostles, whom they killed with impunity, but even over Christ, whom they blasphemed: and yet, who does not see that both the synagogue and the Roman empire are given over to this king? Because they would not accept him, they have come to such ruin that there are scarcely any traces or shadow of so great a power left. Thus this verse overthrew everything that opposed Christ, and we should not doubt that the enemies of Christ, who today oppose the gospel, will perish in the same way. For it is not an empty word: "I will give you the Gentiles" 2c.

Just as the kings of the land rebel, just as the heathen rage, but finally realize that their efforts are in vain and that their destruction is certain, death, sin and the law rage in our hearts in the same way. But because it is written here, "I will give you the Gentiles as your own," these enemies of ours can indeed rise up and do something, but they will not be able to win. For this is given to our King, who is established on Zion. His alone is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. We should do the same with heretics and those who stir up trouble in the church. Zwingli and Carlstadt are now stirring up trouble, trying to persuade the simple that in the holy

The Lord's Supper is eaten only bread and drunk only wine. But Christ's words, by which he clearly teaches (affirmat) that this bread is his body and this cup his blood, they wickedly and ungodly pervert according to the vanity of their hearts. Therefore I have no doubt that they will also suffer punishment for this ungodliness and will finally experience with their great damage that Christ reigns. 1)

The emphasis therefore lies from the word "Gentiles". For it must not be taken merely (nude), only from the bodies or the material according to ((pro materia), but it comprehends the righteousness, wisdom, power, will, reason and all other gifts. All these things the Father subjects to Christ and makes guilty, so that he rejects and condemns the Gentiles with all they have, if they are not in Christ and through Christ in grace. In the world the laws, the striving for virtue, the discipline, the righteousness 2c. are indeed something significant, but compared to Christ they are nothing and deserve eternal damnation. For grace and truth are given to us only through Christ, whom the Father has appointed Lord over all things, even over sin, death and the devil.

But I have said above that this serves to prove that he is the Son of God or God by nature, for it is not in any creature to give life, to put away death, and to blot out sin. Since Christ does this, and does it according to the will, by command, and by the gift of the Father, it follows that he is God, according to the word [Isa. 42:8], "I will give my glory to no other." Rightly, therefore, does the Epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 1, 5.] say, "To what angel did he say, Thou art my Son?" And we also rightly say in the same way here: "To which angel did he give the Gentiles for his own possession and the end of the world for his inheritance?"

V. 9. You shall smash them with an iron scepter; like pots you shall break them.

The previous verse has taught that this king is appointed by divine command,

1) From this passage, the year 1531 results with great probability as the time of the writing of this scripture. Compare the first note Col. 74.

to destroy, to overthrow and to condemn all that there is of God-worship, wisdom, power and righteousness in the whole world and among all pagans. For to this king alone is this honor reserved, that in his name shall be justified and live all who are justified. Therefore the Jews may have innumerable Moses, if the one is not enough for them; the Gentiles may have their teachers of law and righteousness; the monks and saints of works may have certain marks of their spiritual state: if they do not have this King, if they are not adorned and endowed with his righteousness, they are and remain in the kingdom of the devil, in sins and in death. And this is the cause that the world, as the Holy Spirit prophesied in the beginning of this Psalm, sets itself against this King with all its strength and does not want to suffer these bonds. It does not want, as we also learn today, that its wisdom should be condemned; it does not want its righteousness to be accused as if it were sin; it does not want its power to be despised as weakness; in short, it does not want to suffer the judgment that all its own is nothing. For if the miserable good (substantia) that consists in metal, namely gold and silver, makes men puffed up and proud, how much more will service, righteousness, and knowledge of the law that God has given, make the weak hearts puffed up!

When the world hears that these supreme gifts are rejected by the gospel and only this king is praised, it is not only angered, but it also arms itself and strives with all its might to save its gifts from this disgrace. This gives rise to the most bitter battles, that the world and this king meet with hostile hearts, but in that it comes to such an end as the 118th Psalm, v. 22, prophesies: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone." He compares this king to a stone that the builders reject, that is, throw away as if it were of no use. On the other hand, just as they think that the stone is rejected, so they adorn themselves, their righteousness, their works with the title that they please God, that they are the Church and God's people. This contradiction

and rejection must be everywhere where this stone is and where there are builders, that is, such people who boast that they are the church and claim the possession of the right doctrine and the holy services for themselves. But what will finally be the end of this dispute? Certainly this, of which the Psalm says: the rejected stone becomes the cornerstone that supports the whole building, and it happens that "whoever falls on this stone will be crushed, but on whom it falls it will crush him. For this is how Christ interprets Matth. 22, 44. this Psalm, and the opinion of this passage is also completely the same.

He says, "You will crush them with an iron scepter or rod," that is, the world will be aroused against you, it will not suffer this judgment of itself, it will use force and weapons; but how will it go out? Certainly in such a way that they will finally be crushed and perish. For you have an iron or demented rod or scepter, which they will not be able to bear 2c. If someone likes more the translation in the Latin Bible, XXXX: *reges eos* [you will rule them], or as Jerome translates: *Thou shalt feed her* [, he may follow her], for even this image is not without grace and not inappropriate. For so we also use to speak in German: "Thou shalt give them a little bit to eat, when they shall have to die", thou shalt give them such food, on which they will perish.

Therefore, this verse is a threatening word and frightens the wicked who oppose this king; for us, however, it is comforting, who are united with this king and know that, as far as the world is concerned, he is a weak king who suffers in many weaknesses, whether it be that the tyrants and the powerful in the world oppose him, or false brethren and the founders of herds and heresies, or even our own conscience; but the weakness of our King is not so great, nor the power of the adversaries so great, that all who oppose him should not at last fall and perish. Therefore we should hold on to this comfort when the world rages and rages with violence and weapons against this King. For even though the world has great power,

Although this king is very weak, for he has nothing to fight with but the word of the gospel, which, as we see, is surely despised by the world, yet this very word, which is so despised and disdained in the world, will finally destroy all his enemies. For it is, as the prophet speaks here, an iron scepter, whereas the world is an earthen vessel; therefore the potter's vessel is broken by a small blow of iron.

Why, you will say, does the Holy Spirit call the gospel by this name, since it is in truth a word that refreshes and saves souls, just as Christ did not come to destroy the world, but to save the world [Luc. 9:56], but here the Holy Spirit prophesies something quite different, that he will destroy the world? I answer: It is true that this is Christ's ministry, that he makes blessed, that he frees from sins and gives eternal life. Paul also rightly calls the gospel [Rom. 1:16] a power of God that saves all who believe in it. For those who accept Christ and believe his words truly attain salvation. Therefore the Scripture also calls him a cornerstone, which bears the whole weight of the building, on which the whole building rests so that it will not fall. But those who do not accept Christ and hate his word, how can they escape destruction by casting away their salvation? Those who do not want to be founded on this stone, but brazenly go against it, who either fall on this stone, or on whom this stone falls, how will they not be hurt?

Therefore Christ also says, Joh. 12, 47. f.: "I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. He that despiseth me, and receiveth not my words, hath already he that judgeth him: the word which I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day." The gospel is a scepter or rod of salvation to all who believe in it, but those who reject it must necessarily perish, because they reject their salvation. This happens, not because the word is to blame, which is holy and offers life, but because the word is not to blame.

It is their fault, because they reject this salvation that is offered to them, and rather, like the Jews, they base themselves on the law and the sacrifices, like the monks on their vows and human statutes, like all saints of works on the services that they have chosen for themselves. For why do they not humble themselves? why do they not give glory to God? why do they not confess that they are wretched sinners and accept Christ? For then it would be a gospel to their salvation and a rod to their life.

Therefore, this description should be well remembered, that the gospel is called an iron scepter, but those who oppose the gospel are called a potsherd or a potter's vessel. It truly does not take much effort, if you have an iron hammer in your hand, to break an earthen pot. For what need is there of thy strength, what need of the force of arms? The iron that falls on the pot by chance will break it. So this description serves to indicate the insurmountable power of the Word, which is not seen with eyes but is hidden. For if one follows the judgment of the world or of reason, what is there weaker than the word? what more contemptible? For it does not seem to be iron, but a straw or light chaff, which loses its hold by a weak breeze or wind, and cannot stand. For so the kings, the pope, the bishops, and the whole multitude of the wicked think of us, that we are few in number and miserable beggars, who are not even in esteem with our own. Surely, therefore, they despise us and the word we preach, not fearing from us ruin or any calamity. For they are many, and they have great power, dignity and wealth. That is why they laugh at it as an amusing foolishness when we threaten that their so great contempt for the word will be followed by a certain punishment.

Likewise, what were Peter, Paul, and the other apostles compared with the synagogue, whose doctrine, worship, and whole priesthood they had undertaken to change? The chief priests laughed with glee at this nobility. But behold, what did they do?

follows. Has not this weak voice of Peter, Paul and the others been in truth a voice of iron, a hammer with which the synagogue has been shattered like a potsherd and crushed to dust, to such an extent that not even a potsherd is left in which (as Isaiah [Cap. 30:14] says, imitating this image) fire could be taken from the hearth? For the wretched people are not only scattered over the whole earth like broken pieces, but not even a piece is left that would be useful for anything; they are utterly rejected and neither useful for the worldly regime nor for the church. The same will happen to those who nowadays oppose the Word, to the pope and his comrades, to the Turk, to our flocks and enthusiasts, who disturb the congregations with false teachings about Holy Communion, baptism, etc. All of these are painted by the Holy Spirit. All these the Holy Spirit paints here to be broken pieces, in which not even a little fire can be carried. But now this power of the Word is not before us, indeed, the opposite is seen; it seems as if our doctrine, since the multitude of the adversaries is so great, will completely fall away; but the godless teachers, idolatry, tyranny seem to retain the upper hand.

Therefore, this verse serves to comfort us, so that we do not lose heart and despair, but firmly believe that, just as before God the enemies of the Word have already been judged and plunged into hell, so this judgment will also be revealed in its time. For the Word of God, which like a mighty river cannot be restrained by any force, will do what it tends to do according to its nature, namely, it will make the faithful blessed, but it will condemn and crush the ungodly, and that because the author of this Word is wisdom, power and divine justice; therefore it is above all that we have and are. For what is the pope with his righteousnesses? what is the Turk with his power? what are the Sacramentians? what are the Anabaptists with their pithanologiis and their beautifully made-up proofs? In truth, nothing but efficient and useless bubbles of water, which

are puffed up and seem to be something, but suddenly disappear. But let us, especially in these last times, take great comfort from the insurmountable power of the Word. For it is impossible that our hearts should not be troubled at such a great multitude of aversions and the weakness of the church. For it is not a game or a joke that the whole world should lay itself against us. If you compare the Turks and the Papists, they are very dissimilar, and want to be, but in this they agree that they fight against Christ and want this doctrine to be abolished. There is also a great danger for us from false brethren and the originators of ungodly doctrines; yes, our hearts also fight against us, and seek to make this comfort doubtful, which we have through Christ.

Therefore, it is necessary that we magnify the Word and its consolation, and firmly believe that all wisdom, righteousness, and tyranny that is either outside us or within us must either yield to the Word or fall and perish. How great the power of the devil is from without, we feel in the tyrant, but truly it is far more powerful in our hearts. For he has a very large part of us, namely our flesh; this he provokes, so that he torments the hearts with despair, sadness, evil conscience about sin, and other such truly fiery darts. But we are to firmly believe, based on the prophecy of this psalm, that against all these evils and all difficulties, our King Christ sits, who is the Son of God, and adorned with this title, that he is "a King of kings," Revelation 19:16, and that he has in his hand a hammer of iron; but the tyrants, the heretics, and everything that opposes this word, is the vessel of a potter. Now when the battle comes between these, it is impossible for the earthen vessel to overpower the iron; the iron will crush and crush the broken pieces. But true righteousness, wisdom, blessedness and life will remain with us, as we believe, whether the world and the devil want it or not. For the word of the Lord abides forever, our High Priest and King Christ abides, so

we also who believe in him will remain; but the enemies of the word will all fall and perish, amen.

The Holy Spirit, in using the simile of the earthen vessel, has in mind not only that it can be broken very easily and without any effort, but also that earthen vessels, when broken, are of no use at all. Wooden vessels can be burned, and they serve to light fires with; if iron, silver, or gold vessels are broken, the remains are still of some use, but the pieces of a pottery vessel are of no use at all; thus the enemies of the word will be eternally rejected.

V. 10. Let yourselves therefore be instructed, O kings, and let yourselves be chastened, O judges of the earth.

Hitherto the prophet, full of the Holy Spirit, has depicted Christ and his kingdom; now he adds an exhorting sermon, the like of which cannot be found in all the Scriptures. For other writers are in the habit of doing this: they praise the rulers (*imperia*) and authorities, and exhort the subjects to obedience; and they do well at it. But the prophet does it quite differently. He speaks not to the peasants, not to the servants, not to the children, that they should be obedient, but to the kings themselves, commanding them to be instructed and chastened. What have you ever heard that is like this, that those are commanded to be chastened who rule over others? Is it not a great hope to speak so contemptuously to the kings in general, to exclude none, but to address all at once as fools who understand nothing, as if they lived without laws, without all discipline? For if they are already understanding beforehand, why does he say, "Let yourselves be guided"? If they are guided by laws, why does he say, "Let yourselves be disciplined," or, "Take discipline"?

And this is the cause that this king, as the prophet said in the beginning, does not reign without cross and many plagues from countless enemies. For because he exhorts all other kings without exception to discipline, because he violates their laws, righteousness, wisdom

and calls the kings and judges of the earth themselves fools who need a master to teach them justice and discipline, so they rebel against him, do not want to be taught, do not want to be considered fools.

You will say, then are the rulers (*imperia*) evil, or the laws to be condemned? Not at all. For the kingdoms and the laws are ordered by God Himself. But look at this king, what he is like. He is not a worldly king, but he is a teacher who teaches how to obtain forgiveness of sins and eternal life. To whom: you transfer the laws and the rulers to this area, as if they could be useful to attain salvation, you are mistaken. Therefore, he does not condemn the wisdom and righteousness of kings when they remain in their place, that is, when they direct and govern things subject to reason by their wisdom, and also entice others to obey the laws and serve the common peace by living honorably. For here also diligence and virtue have their reward, for GOD gives prosperity. But if, trusting in these gifts, one despises the word, rejects the mediator Christ, and hopes for blessedness from the same 2c., this is the sin that this king condemns in the most powerful, wise and holy people here, and therefore commands them to come to him, to learn from him, to hear him 2c.

Therefore, not only Moses and the law are rejected here, but also all rulers (*imperia*) with all the gifts they have, with their wisdom, power, laws, discipline, virtues, with all spiritual states (*religionibus*) and everything they do, because it is of no use at all for salvation. But it is shown that salvation is in this One, if you listen to him as a teacher, if you surrender to him, that he governs you, accustoms you, forms and shapes you. For this King, as they say, is all in all (*fac totum*). GOTte pleases nothing, GOTte is nothing pleasant except this king. Therefore, those who do not accept this king, who do not throw themselves at his feet, who do not use him as a mediator, God hates them, rejects them and condemns them for eternity, eighth their works for nothing,

their virtues for nothing, their special efforts for nothing, their righteousness and holiness for nothing, by which they believe to make themselves pleasing to God. For he alone is the Son in whom the Father is well pleased; he alone has and possesses everything, according to the Father's will.

Therefore, this verse also serves to strengthen us against the great trouble with which the church is plagued. For if one looks at what is really going on, the opposite happens; for kings and lords do not allow themselves to be instructed, but seek to break this bond of discipline with all their might, as the Spirit said above [v. 3]. To this is added the devil, who with all hell sets himself against this teacher, and stirreth up false prophets. Our hearts are not calm either. For agitated by the law, sin and the fear of death, they seek other protection than this teacher. Here we are to encourage ourselves, and comfort ourselves with this verse, that this alone is the teacher by whom we can be rightly instructed, and it shall come to pass that those who do not hear him shall perish in short, with all their gifts and everything on which they rely. Thus the Lord says in Isaiah, Cap. 52, 15: "Kings will shut their mouths against him," that is, all the kings of the earth will be in comparison to him, like a disciple against his teacher; the teacher speaks and teaches, the disciple is silent and listens.

This is the way kings should behave if they want to attain salvation, and of course all those who want to be saved keep their mouths shut and obey the voice of the gospel, but the majority do the opposite. For our King is set for a sign which is contradicted [Luc. 2:34]. But those who contradict, what profit will they have from it? Certainly that they will be condemned and rejected by God. For the sentence is passed that not only the kings and lords shall depart from this king, but also the gates of hell and all the angels. For he alone shall fill heaven and earth and all things, as Paul says [Eph. 1:20 ff.] to our consolation, that we may cling to him in steadfast faith, and hope for salvation through him alone. This is the right theo

logy, which instructs and aligns the hearts in the highest dangers.

The time particle "now" is not idle, because it denotes the time when the gospel was spread by the apostles. If you consider the outward appearance here, not only the highest weakness is before your eyes, but also obvious danger in the matter. For a few and despised people from among the least of your people are spreading a new kind of doctrine in the world, teaching that one becomes blessed through Christ crucified, in such a way that they condemn everything else that is done to attain blessedness. This trouble the Holy Spirit sees, and therefore says [Vulg.], "Now be wise, ye kings," that is, let yourselves be instructed and taught, "and be wise, ye judges of the earth," that is, let yourselves be chastened, let your righteousness and worship be punished, and obey this Teacher; who shall teach you the right way to salvation 2c. Therefore, as above [v. 7.] Christ himself said that he would preach, so in this place the Holy Spirit exhorts that no one neglect this preacher. For he makes Christ the King a teacher, and shows that the whole world is his school; but his pupils are the kings and judges. But if these are to hear this teacher, how can we doubt that those who are lower down are also to hear him? In short, this king teaches the whole world, so that all may know that they have been in error with all their righteousness and merits.

But as the Holy Spirit calls all into this school together, there are only a few who admit this teacher. Therefore, riots, raving, indignation, and everything that an angry heart can think of follow. And yet this teacher finally triumphs, but the disobedient disciples perish, as he will say soon after [v. 12] and also said above [v. 9]. Therefore the words "be understanding" and "be instructed" must be taken in all their gravity. For the Holy Spirit indicates that kings, judges, 2c., though they have knowledge of the law and practice virtue, are fools and fools if they do not hear this teacher and let themselves be instructed by him. For

If the knowledge of Christ is lacking, all wisdom is foolishness, all righteousness is unrighteousness and sin, and even life itself is death. In this verse, therefore, the Holy Spirit sums up the whole world and subjects everything to Christ. He speaks to the kings as if they were locusts, to the wise men of the world as if they were children. For he sees what will finally happen if they do not hear this King, namely that they will be thrown into the eternal fire with all their wisdom, righteousness and power. For this is God's commandment, that all should humble themselves, that they should shut their mouths, as Isaiah Cap. 52, 15. says, that they should recognize that this king alone is the one through whom life and salvation should come. Those who obey this commandment will be saved, those who do not will perish.

V. 11. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

So far the prophet has taught that the King Christ is established on Mount Zion, and has also described him, how he is constituted and how great he is, namely the Son of God, begotten from eternity, true God, and yet also born in the time of man, that he might take the throne of his father David and rule in Zion. After that he said that this kingdom should be extended to the end of the world. For unto this King are all nations given, that he should be King over all kings, and Lord over all lords, upon whom be the eyes and ears and hearts of all men, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, whether they be righteous or sinners, whether they be spiritual or temporal authorities. For all things rest on this King alone: he alone has life, he alone justifies, he alone saves. To this teaching, which is the most noble part of this psalm, the prophet attaches an exhortation, in which he names the same people he named in the beginning, namely the kings and judges who rage when this king exercises his office, and reminds them to stop raging and to humble themselves and become disciples, so that they may be judged and condemned as sinners and rejected people, and hear this Son.

This verse also belongs to this admonition, for he not only commands them to listen, but after they have heard this king, he also wants them to desist from their rebellion and serve him, and adds the cause: for, he says, this king is the LORD or the true God. For here is the name called the Tetragrammaton [namely, Jehovah, and which in Scripture alone is attributed to GÖtte. The Jews by no means admit that the person whom the prophet called a "king" above [v. 6.] is here called "the HErr" or Jehovah; but they contend in vain. For immediately he adds [v. 12.], "Kiss the Son." But because the word "kiss" is a word signifying a service of God, the Father wills that all should worship and serve this Son, and indicates that when this King is served, the true GOOD is served, and that those who would serve the true GOOD should do so in the Son. In this way Hosea in the third chapter [v. 5] connects the service of God and this king, when he says: "Then the children of Israel will turn and seek the Lord their God and their king David." For since the Father and the Son are One, the Father cannot be worshipped without the Son, and the Father commands that those who would serve Him in truth should serve the Son and hear Him. But those who deny the Son, like the Jews and the Turks, also deny God Himself and are detestable idolaters.

Therefore, we are to reject the dreams of the Jews, and firmly believe that the person of the Son, who is the Son of David and sits in the Castle of David as King, is GOD, and in this place is called by the exalted name of GOD [Jehovah]. This is the first thing that needed to be remembered here. The other is that we must also pay attention to the actual meaning of the words. For you know how these words have been perverted in the Church of the Pope, by which the service against GOD is signified. This has happened because no one has taken the trouble to look carefully at the text, or rather because God has blinded us with such ingratitude.

We did not see what was in front of our eyes. For if you search the books of the newer theologians, you will see that serving God is nothing else than fleeing into the desert, leaving the duties of the world and home regiment behind and hiding in a monastery.

But if this were the correct description, to what purpose are the commandments, of which the books of the apostles are full, of the love of husbands and wives for one another, of the obedience of servants, of the cheap and benevolent behavior of masters, of the careful attention in the government of the commonwealth? Do not these very commandments show that the Gospel praises all these estates? What nonsense, therefore, was it to teach that "to serve" is to flee these estates, to change not only one's dress, but also one's nature and sex? For what does a monk do other than that he wants to be something other than a man (*masculus*) against God's order? Is this not the utmost nonsense? I remember that there were two outstanding jurists in Erfurt. When they were about to die, they said with heavy sighs: "Oh, if we had not been teachers of law, but monks, how much happier we would die now! But what had passed away could not be made up for. Therefore, there seemed to be only one thing left that could help them, namely, they ordered that, in addition to the masses (*sacra*), which they bought at a high price, their corpses should also be clothed in monastic robes, and thus they would be buried in monastic clothing. Did they not clearly indicate that they did not know that they had served God in their office?

Therefore, the right description must be given so that you will certainly think that serving God does not consist in changing your clothes, changing your sex, relying on your office in the betting and domestic regiment, and hiding in a monastery. All this is something external and can be pretended. But this is even an abomination, that one undertakes these things without command.

of the word, out of one's own devotion, as it is called. Beware, therefore, that you do not adorn such things with that lofty title, that they are worship or service of God. But what am I disputing about "human" statutes? Not even the Jews dare to adorn their sacrifices and other legal observances, which are known to be commanded by God, with this title and call them a service against God. For if the Psalm said: Come to Jerusalem, sacrifice, cleanse your clothes, fast, worship at the cherubim 2c., then we would certainly be forced to declare that this is actually the service against God; but of these things the Psalm says nothing, but speaks of a new kingdom and of a new doctrine, which is established after Moses.

Therefore, put out of sight everything that is spiritual (*religionum*) and worshipful, even those that God instituted through Moses Himself. For this new king has come, therefore a new service is also established. A Jew can keep his circumcision, a monk can keep his cap, but it is necessary that he be certain that this is not a service that God has imposed, not a service with which this king wants to be worshipped. But because both, a monk and a Jew, keep this as a service, they are condemned at this point by the Holy Spirit, and another form or way of service is prescribed.

But what kind of way this is, can be shown from the holy ten commandments, where it says: "You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only" [Deut. 6, 13. Matth. 4, 10.]. I use to distinguish these two parts in such a way that "worship" is said by a man who is converted to God, but "serve" by the man who is sent by God; or, as Christ uses to speak in the same way [John 10:9], "worship" is said by the one who goes in to God, but "serve" by the one who goes out from God. For he who worships falls on his knees and shows signs of submission; this is, as it were, a suffering (*passiva*) service. For by thus turning to the LORD in certain confidence in his mercy for Christ's

1) Instead of: et xoUtois in the Erlanger is to be read: xo1itioi8 et.

he receives forgiveness of sins and is made righteous. And after he is accepted in grace in this way, he goes out from God and turns to men, and carries out the commandment of God concerning service to men. Now that Paul has been justified by faith, he does the works of a righteous person (*justa*), that is, he fulfills his office with teaching, a godly ruler with governing, a householder with works, and so they serve God. For they do not, like the monks, what they like, but what God commands.

Serving God, then, is nothing other than doing what God commands and acknowledging that this is the obedience due. The monks and other teachers of the pope did not know this, otherwise they would not have asked to go to the monasteries and to leave the offices in the world and domestic regiment. It would have been enough for them, in whatever profession they were, if they had kept in mind the holy ten commandments and practiced the works that are commanded; but they would not have invented new works that are quite contrary to the ordinary way of life, as those of the monks and the whole papacy are. In this way, I wanted to remind in general what it means to serve God.

Furthermore, although the Jews deny that Christ is called "the Lord" in this passage, nevertheless, because the whole Psalm speaks of the new King, who is set up in Zion, and to whom the Gentiles and the ends of the earth are given, and whom the kings are commanded to serve, it must be indicated here in particular, as it were, what it means to serve your kings Christ. But we do not want to depart from the general description. For to serve the King Christ is nothing else than to hear this King, and then to do in his name everything that our profession or office requires, so that the opinion is: You kings and judges, and all that is high in the church or in the secular government, let go of everything that exists in the whole world, including Moses, laws, rights, etc., and listen to this King, offer yourselves to him as disciples, listen to him. This is the first part of the service. After that put into practice what you have heard and do

it in the name of this King, as Paul says Col. 3, 17.: "All things whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the LORD JESU, giving thanks unto GOD and the Father through him."

Therefore, "serving Christ" is not putting on a cap, it is not dealing with Mosaic ceremonies, but it is a completely spiritual thing; not in the way that the monks call something spiritual (*spirituale*), which only goes on in the heart, but it is a spiritual service that comes from the spirit. For he who speaks, preaches, teaches the words of the spirit is rightly said to speak spiritually. In the same way, he who does holy works, that is, he who does what is commanded in the Ten Commandments, is said to live spiritually. Thus a householder lives spiritually who governs his house in faith in the Son of God. For spiritual obedience is to do in faith in the Son of God what you are commanded to do by the commandment of God. Then you have what it means to serve this king; not, as the monks are wont to do, to go into a monastery, not to choose this or that work, but to look at this king and hear him, and then do what you have heard.

But why does he add: "Serve him with fear"? In doing so, he is secretly aiming at the kings. Because they are endowed with power and wealth, they violently oppose this king. For persecuting Christ is not really found among the little people, who can easily be kept in check, but among the kings of the world, who are presumptuous of their power and their goods. The Holy Spirit has these especially in mind and admonishes them to turn this pride into humility and to fear this king, so that no one will know that they are kings. For to be a king and to serve are things that are contrary to each other, and yet the Spirit wants even the kings to serve, that is, to recognize that they are servants of this king, and more servants than their own subjects find. Therefore he inserts a threat into the exhortation. Because he sees that they are puffed up and secure because of their power, he reminds them that they should humble themselves and abandon everything they rely on,

and humbly throw themselves at the feet of this king and hear him.

But does not this Psalm protect the Anabaptists? For when he teaches that kings should serve, he wants them to take off the crowns, the scepters and the other insignia that give them dignity and elevate them above the ordinary position of men. So he puts them badly in a row with others, so that there is no difference between a king and a miller 2c. This is by no means the case. For kings as kings, and judges as judges, shall render the new service. They are not to throw away their kingdoms, but to keep them, and yet to reverence and hear this King, and to establish their laws according to his word, that is, to decree nothing contrary to the word of Christ. Therefore, the Holy Spirit does not abolish or change the worldly laws, but subjects them to this King, so that they will not be against him. Therefore, not only kings and lords should keep their office, but also those who hold high ecclesiastical offices (titulos). Namely, the pope and the bishops shall remain in their position, only they shall acknowledge this king and humbly bow before him and accept his word.

But the prophet describes this service very emphatically, as he commands that they should serve this king with fear. But this is for the purpose, as I said above, of noticing the persons with whom the Holy Spirit speaks. Kings puff themselves up because of their power and wealth, judges or teachers because of their wisdom, and in general they are all worksaints, that is, they hold fast to the delusion of their holiness and regard themselves as righteous. These, therefore, are the ones to whom the Holy Spirit says, "Serve with fear." For others, who suffer tribulation, who, lacking human assistance, have to struggle not only with hunger, but also with sins and their consciences, are already in the fear of God; therefore, this sermon does not go to them, but that one must believe the forgiveness of sins through the Son of God, who became a sacrifice for us, of which the Psalm immediately continues, saying, "Rejoice with

Trembling." For the Holy Spirit does not want us to fear in such a way that we, overwhelmed by fear, despair, but just as he wants presumption to be removed, and therefore commands us to fear, so he also wants despair to be removed, and commands us to remain on the middle road, fearing and hoping at the same time, as if he wanted to say: Just as this King does not want to suffer the pride of kings and the righteousness of saints, so he does not want to suffer the rejection of the poor and the foolish people who cannot advise themselves. But he wills this, that thou mayest both fear, and so escape hopefulness or presumption, and rejoice, that thou mayest escape despair. Those who do not want to fear him, he threatens with misfortune, for he has an iron scepter; but those who fear him in such a way that they rejoice at the same time, that is, that they firmly believe that they will be justified solely through the mercy of God and the good deed of Christ, they are in truth children of God, who fear God, not as a tyrant, but like children their parents, with reverence. For they mix the fear of God with joy and hope, and yet they remain in humble reverence, so that their courage does not become too great and become presumptuous. This is the right service to God, which we realize can never be unlearned. But our adversaries, the enthusiasts, despise it as something known and, as they say, worn on their shoes, so they occupy themselves with other things in which some glory of special spiritual gifts seems to be chased.

In this way the 147th Psalm, v. 11. connects this: "The Lord is pleased with those who fear him and hope in his goodness." Why does he add, "In those who fear him"? Certainly for the sake of those who hope in him, who trust in his wisdom and righteousness; in them he has no pleasure. But only those who fear him, that is, those who recognize themselves as sinners, and therefore do not puff themselves up, but humbly bow their heads, are pleasing to him. For when you feel terror in this way, you must

You must not let your heart slacken too much; you must not think that God is angry with you, that he has rejected you, that he wants to destroy you, but you must lift up your eyes and look at Christ, who placed himself as mediator between God and us, and took our sins on his neck, and suffered the penalty of death for them on the cross. This sight, like the sight of the serpent of brass, will alleviate the fear so that it does not become too great and turn into despair.

But, as I have said, this is something very difficult, and it is with great difficulty that Christians come to understand this part of the psalm. We hear the words and see that they are easy, but the heart does not allow these things when it becomes serious, as others that have sprouted from human wisdom. Therefore, our whole life is not enough to learn only this One Art. For nature rushes on both sides and is exceedingly impetuous, as the poet also says:

**Nescia mens hominum
fati sortisque futurae,
Et servare modum,
rebus sublata
secundis.** [And a similar saying is found in

Basil: "For it is equally difficult to bring the soul through happily in the difficulties of great trades, and not to be moved to hopefulness in things clearly at hand." For when the heart is puffed up by prosperity, there is no measure of hopefulness, as can be seen in the rich people of the world, and the Turkish people are an excellent example of this today. Against them, therefore, the Holy Spirit says: Fear, be not hopeful, but serve this king with fear. On the other hand, when things go badly, no animal is so distraught with fear as man, for there is no measure of complaint, and we easily fall into despair. This is our nature; we are extremely depraved in both respects, whether we are in adversity or in prosperity.

Therefore, we must make every effort to moderate and govern the sinful impetuous nature and go to this King, who is not only the only physician of these abominable diseases, but also the guide, as he says [Matth. 11, 29.]: "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." The complaint of the apostle Paul is well known, as he says, Rom. 7, 22. f.: "I delight in God's law according to the inward man; but I see another law in my members, which is contrary to the law in my mind," that is, the whole nature disputes against God's law. This is truly a frightening word, but he adds a harsher one: "The law in my members," he says, "takes me captive to sin," that is, I may or may not want to, so I am forced to serve sin, against the law of God. Thus we see in the young people the impulse of unchastity, which, whether they want to or not, draws them to sin, and neither in reason nor in free will is there so much power that they could suppress this raging impulse; thus the old people are devoured by avarice.

But as these vices assail and afflict a certain age of life, so all Christians are assailed and afflicted, yea, utterly consumed, either by sadness in evil days, or by security when things are well. Such people we all are by nature; sins take us captive, that we cannot rejoice with fear, or fear with gladness. This mixture is so utterly difficult, and utterly impossible, to balance the burden (temperamentum ponderis, to use a philosophical term in theological matters), which the Holy Spirit lays out here. For to fear and to rejoice are quite opposite emotions, and yet, if we are to be Christians, both are necessary, both to fear and to rejoice.

The newer theologians have discussed a great deal about servile and filial fear, and it is easy to see what difference there is between a father who chastises his son and an executioner. For when the father chastises the son, he does not let

He sees the end of the chastisement (*virgae*), that is, he feels that the wrath will be put away at the same time as the rod. Even though it hurts him, even though he fears the wrath of the Father, he still retains the hope of mercy. A thief does not have such a heart when he is punished and the executioner seizes him. For he knows that the executioner's heart is such that he will not show him mercy and will not be satisfied until he has strangled the thief with the rope. Therefore he despairs because he does not foresee an end to the punishment. This example [of father and son], which is taken from the household, is very glorious, but when we are in punishment, we are not persuaded that God is a father toward us. Therefore we do not fear Him with childlike fear, for we do not see His intention to instruct us, but with servile fear, for we think that He is angry without end. Now who could be wise here, when he feels the punishments of sins, and say: You are a child of God, but God chastises you as a father chastises his son whom he loves; "his anger lasts for a moment" [Ps. 30:6], "the Lord will not be angry forever" [Jer. 3:12], he would do what the Holy Spirit commands in this passage.

David was well versed in this art, as his sermons testify. Experience also shows that he did not give up hope in the punishment, for he continued to call upon God. Although the joy was very weak, he overcame the fear, because he saw the end of the chastisement, so that he would not be completely devoured, which happens to the wicked. If you look at the flesh, even in David it is almost overwhelmed with fear, so that he does not feel joy, and yet, as Paul says [Rom. 7:25], he serves the law of God with his mind. Even while suffering the punishment of banishment, he calls upon God; he does not think that, as with an executioner, there is no place for grace; even while suffering the plagues, he thinks of himself: He is a Father, he will not be angry forever. It is therefore easy to say that the right fear of God is a filial fear, that is, mixed with joy or hope, but if you give the leader the right fear, he will not be angry with you.

If you follow the same path, you will feel that the joy will be overwhelmed and extinguished by fear. But therefore do not lose heart, do not despair, wait for the Lord and take hold of His word, which proclaims that the wrath of God lasts only for a moment, but that He delights in life [Ps. 30:6], that is, God wants us to live, He does not want us to perish, and for this reason He has imposed the plagues. So it will happen that you will feel at least a drop of joy, which will gradually grow, so that it will finally overcome fear. The exercise is difficult, but it is such that, as the examples testify, the saints of God have learned to put it into practice. We must follow in their footsteps and learn this art, but the Holy Spirit will help us, especially if we pray.

Many young people fear the Lord and do not plunge into pleasures like the slaves of the devil. If you look at their hearts, you will see that they are so challenged with the lust of unchastity that they do not even feel a drop of chastity, but still desire with all their heart that it be given to them. What need of many words? They judge and feel that their hearts are like whorehouses in which there is nothing of chastity, and yet chastity is hidden in the innermost heart, but suppressed by the feeling of unchastity, until the time comes when they enter into marriage. For although they cannot be without carnal desire, yet their hearts sigh for chastity, which they feel is not there; they wish it were there, and against their will bear this burning of unchastity. Therefore, just as this chastity, hidden as it were in a corner, is almost extinguished by the feeling of unchastity, so also this joy is not felt, but fear has taken over everything, and yet fear does not retain the victory. Thus other passions also have the upper hand as far as feeling is concerned, but at last virtue and hope gain the upper hand as far as strength is concerned. For the power of virtue is greater than that of fear, unchastity and other passions.

This must be learned and practiced in such a way

will carry. For it cannot be otherwise; "God's power is mighty in the weak" [2 Cor. 12:9]. Paul, too, would have liked to have a pure fear, a pure joy, a pure chastity, that is, a pure sense of these gifts which he had and of which he needed. But if this were granted to us in this life, it would no longer be a miserable life, but a lovely paradise. If a young man, an old man, had no sense of sin, if he were not plagued with despair, he would be in the very kingdom of heaven. But this life is not to be like that, indeed, it cannot even be like that; pure joy is not to be felt, fear is to be mixed in. For as long as this flesh lives, it does what is of the flesh. This we shall never fully amend, therefore we shall not despair. For the spirit is hidden, which God sees; and because we take hold of Christ in faith, he gladly forgives the sins of the flesh. This is one part of the service of God, that we serve the King Christ in fear, and rejoice in him with trembling. But there is a great reason why he combines joy with trembling. For if one felt pure joy, certainty would follow; certainty would be followed by presumption, but presumption would be followed by condemnation. For God cannot tolerate presumption. But we will mix this when we are joyful in God, but rightly dismayed in ourselves. For we are not only foolish but also wretched sinners. There is therefore sufficient cause for us to tremble and fear for ourselves.

But you must not stop there. For if you see nothing but that you are a sinner, despair will follow. Therefore, we must lift up our eyes and look to Christ, and then fear will be followed by joy. For then we will say: I am indeed a sinner, but for that reason I will not despair. For Christ is righteous; indeed, Christ took my sins upon Himself, and suffered for them, and rose again, that I might be clothed with His righteousness. Therefore, if there is no counsel with me, He is given to me by God to be my wisdom; if I am poor and helpless, He is mighty and rich 2c. This is only the pure service of God, with which

Christ wants to be worshipped by us, who is separated from all superstition. For the Holy Spirit does not care about them, just as he does not care about all other things that are established by human counsel. He leaves the kings their crowns and scepters. If a monk wants to fast, if he wants to use other clothes and a different way of life than other people, he does not care about that either; he wants this to be subject to human reason and to be kept as it is convenient for each one; only that the one rule be observed, that we give no one any trouble. But this he requires of all, whether they be kings, or monks, or saints, or mighty men, that they humble themselves before this King, that they hear him, boast of him alone, rejoice in him alone, but humble themselves in themselves and all their own. Those who do this service, if they do it in the name of Jesus, all that they do in their profession is pleasing to God.

Therefore, we too should learn to perform this service of God, and set it apart from all outward things. For God does not care whether you are a king or a servant, a husband or without marriage, a man or a woman, a teacher or a student. These are human orders or creatures, as Peter calls them [2 Ep. 2, 13.], over which we are to be lords and rulers, as GOD has willed. He does not care whether you fast or eat, if you do it only for your benefit. He says: all this has nothing to do with me and with my service. For my service is that you honor me, receive everything from me, know me, speak of me, praise me, that all that is in the whole world is mine; that you confess that you are sinners when you are without me, foolish and weak; likewise, that you recognize me, that I am not a tyrant; that I do not humble you for this reason, because I want to destroy you, but to bring you away from arrogance and to teach you to be humble. When this has been accomplished by me through the cross, I want you to be raised up again, to lift up your heads and eyes to my Christ. For when either wisdom, or righteousness, or strength is lacking, there you have the source of all wisdom and righteousness. So

you will serve me with fear and rejoice with trembling. The trembling is very great in feeling, but the joy is small in feeling, but it will finally triumph with great power.

When I was a young person, I hated this verse, because I did not like to hear that God should be feared. This was because I did not know that fear should be mixed with joy or hope, that is, I did not know the difference between our works and Christ's works. Our works are evil, as the whole nature is corrupt; therefore, we must not be secure, but fear the judgment of God. Whereas Christ's works are holy and perfect, therefore we must keep hope of mercy. For he was not born for his own sake, put under the law, and finally crucified; he wanted these to be our gifts. Therefore, we should fear so that joy is not completely excluded. But it must be a true joy. For it is not so shut up in the heart that outward signs of it should not appear. A calm heart and one that truly believes that God is reconciled to us for the sake of Christ, makes the face joyful and the eyes friendly, it loosens the tongue to the praise of God. In this way, says the Holy Spirit, you will serve this King, that there may be inward and outward joy, yet joined with reverence, lest you become swine and all-sure, descending to carnal joy. For if you do the security of it, God is not offended by mirth; yea, he is offended by sadness, and enjoins mirth. Thus it was forbidden in the law for mourners to offer sacrifice, and Malachi says [Cap. 2, 13.] that sacrifices are defiled by sadness. Therefore we should be joyful, but in such a way that we do not become secure, but that fear is added to joy, and hope to fear. This is an admonition against the hopeful and for the fainthearted who are too humiliated. For it is as much blasphemy to despair as to be presumptuous. For God has not willed that we in heaven or on earth

but in the middle. The feet point downward, but the head points upward, and even though we live on earth, we are commanded that our walk should be in heaven. In short, those who are Christians are not altogether (purely) fearful, nor altogether joyful. With fear is joined joy, with trembling hope, with tears laughter, that we may think that we shall not fully rejoice until we have put off this flesh; as it cannot put off fear, so it is profitable for it to be in fear, lest it should become secure. In this way, the present Psalm has described the service of God. For only this is a right worship of God, when one fears and trusts in GOtt. Where these two pieces are properly mixed, the whole life is righteous and holy. The outward ceremonies and all the outward works are easily arranged when these two things are in proper balance. Now he adds a threat and a consolation to conclude the prophecy properly.

V. 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish out of the way: for his wrath shall soon be kindled. But good to all who trust in him.

Here, a very harsh threat is added to the exhortation. But it serves to dampen the hope of kings, wise men, saints and all those who trust in the creature apart from God. But our nature is so corrupt, we are so inclined to presumption and security when everything is going well, that it is impossible for us to stand unless the Holy Spirit changes our hearts. Not laws, not any punishments can ward off this infirmity; only the voice that sounds from heaven drives away this hopefulness and moderates joy through fear. Now, as for the grammar, those who understand Hebrew know that here it must be read: "Kiss", not as the Latin text has: *Apprehendite* [seize]. Therefore, we leave the seventy interpreters 1) their opinion, but for this reason we do not want to speak of

1) Also in the Septuagint, as in the Vulgate, the translation is "seize", as the following shows.

of the right interpretation, which the Hebrew requires.

Where the Septuagint translated δῥάξα- σ&αι παιδείαν, the Hebrew reads παιδείαν] XX, and the meaning of this word extends very far. For it is an adjective and means: pure, chosen. Hence Jerome translates, Adorate pure [worship pure? But by antonomasia, 1) which makes a proper name out of a generic name, it is afterwards transferred to other things, and because of the excellence peculiar to it (individui], wheat or grain is so [viz. XX] called, as a chosen thing. Thus we understand by the apostle Paul, by the prophet David, by the philosopher Aristotle, by the man of war George of Frundsberg 2) (Fronsberg) 2c. Because of the excellence often a generic name becomes a proper name. Thus Christ is preferably called the righteous, the wise, the high priest, the son of man, the king 2c. In this way, 12, used substantively, also denotes a son, as a particularly chosen, dear and pleasant thing for the parents. If David had wanted to speak according to Hebrew, he would have said f2. But he uses 12 in the same meaning by antonomasia, to make the prophecy dark before the devil and the wicked, who are not worthy to see it. This is, as far as I can see, the right reason for this designation. In the 19th Psalm, v. 9, it is adjective: "The commandments of the Lord are pure" (purum); the Latin translation has lucidum shell?

But, you will say, what is the purpose of the word "kisses"? It means a ceremony. But the kinds of kisses are very different. The bride in the Song of Songs says [Cap. 1, 1.]: "He kisses me with the kiss of his mouth", which is a kiss of love and a sign of the highest love. Therefore Peter also says 3) [1. Ep.

1) Compare A. Crull, Lehrbuch der deutschen Sprache, p. 156.

2) Georg von Frundsberg (Fronsberg), the famous leader of the Landsknechts, was a contemporary of Luther. He won the Battle of Pavia on February 25, 1525, in which the King of France, Francis I, was taken prisoner by the troops of Emperor Carl V. He was the first to be captured in the battle.

3) In all editions erroneously: kuntus. But in all passages of Paul (Rom. 16, 16. 1 Cor. 16, 20. 2 Cor. 13, 12. 1 Thess. 5, 26.) it says: "with your holy kiss".

5, 14]: "Greet one another with the kiss of love". Another is the kiss of hands, which is, according to our custom, paying homage. We use it against those whom we recognize as our masters. Another is the kiss of the feet, by which the extreme humiliation is indicated, and Christ made use of it at the Lord's Supper, so that he indicated that he was the least in the kingdom of heaven [Matth. 11, 11.] and servant of all [Marc. 9, 35.]. For he became our servant and took us for his lords, since he worked for us and bore our sins. Thus the kiss of the hands and the kiss of the feet agree in their meaning, although the latter is a sign of a deeper humiliation. Jerome, therefore, has not expressed the word, but the sense, since he translates, "Worship," but in this he has erred in expressing the noun XX by an adverbial: "Worship purely." If he had translated it by a noun, he would have made it right: worship the pure, the elect, the shining. For so we also use to say: my light, my little heart.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit praises us the Son of God with very beautiful and quite eloquent words: "Kiss", be subject, fall down, humble yourselves, recognize yourselves as subjects. Whose, or before whom? Before your most elect, before the purest, in whom alone the Father is well pleased, as the Father testifies from heaven [Matth. 3, 17.]: "This is my dear Son," and Christ himself says in John [Cap. 3, 35.]: "The Father loves the Son." These very sayings this Psalm has in itself, and prophesies of them, naming the Son with the Hebrew word XX, as if to say, He is my beloved, my pure, my elect, in whom I have all my delight, "my heart, my joy." Therefore, worship the 4) one who is the only pleasure of God, and is in the highest pleasure with him, so you will worship God, do God a pleasing service 2c. Bow your knees before him, kiss his feet 2c.

4) Wittenberger: euni; Jenaer and Erlanger: vsuiri. We have followed the former reading. - Immediately following we have deleted the comma, which in all editions is after suinua.

Furthermore, these sayings indicate that Christ is not a mere man, since the Father ascribes His glory to His Son and commands that the Son be worshipped. Moses says [Deut. 6:13, Matt. 4:10], "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and serve Him alone," and in Isaiah [Cap. 42:8] the Lord says, "I will not give My glory to any other." Now since GOD cannot be a liar, and yet here commands that this king be worshipped, it follows that this king, who is established on Zion, is by nature GOD. Therefore, I have also shown above that the Jews, even though they claim that the preceding verse does not refer to this king, but to God Himself, must nevertheless admit, if they are not completely nonsensical, that God here refers us all to the Son by His commandment, and wants the Son to be served and worshipped. Therefore, this statement agrees with these words of the Gospel [Matth. 17, 5.]: "This is my dear Son, whom you shall hear." [Joh. 6, 47. 8, 51.]: "He that believeth on me shall never see death." [Joh. 14, 1.]: "If ye believe in GOD, ye believe also in me." [Joh. 7, 16.]: "My doctrine is not mine." [Joh. 12, 49. f. 14, 10.]: "What I speak, the Father speaks." [Jn. 5, 17.]: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work." [Joh. 5, 19. 27.]: "The Father has given me everything." [Joh. 5, 22.]: "The Father has given judgment to the Son." [Jn. 8, 15.]: "The Son judges no one." [Joh. 5, 21.]: "As the Father makes alive, so also the Son" 2c.

In these sayings the one refers to the other, the father to the son, and the son to the father, so that it cannot be doubtful to us that this king is true, right, natural God, and if you do not worship and accept this king, God cannot be served. For the Father and the Son are One [John 10:30]. In vain, therefore, is it that the Turk, in vain that the pope, in vain that a monk dwells (speculatur) on his thoughts of GOD apart from Christ. For the Turk says that he worships GOD who made heaven and earth; the Jew says the same. But because both deny that Christ is the Son of God, they not only lack God, but also worship an idol.

of their heart, for they invent such a God as they themselves want to trot out, not as GOD has revealed Himself. But GOD hath an abomination against them, and stoppeth his ears against their prayers. For he will hear and see no one, except in his Son.

Thus Christ says to Philip, John 14:9, "Philip, he that seeth me seeth the Father." For when Philip asks, "Show us the Father," Christ answers in amazement, "So long am I with you, and you do not know me?" as if to say: Where are your thoughts and dreams leading you? If you do not fix your eyes and heart firmly on me, you will never find either GOD or the Father. "For the Father is in me, and I in the Father; and the words that I speak, I speak not of myself, but the Father which dwelleth in me, the same doeth the works." 2c. [In this way it is seen that the Father, as it were weary of having dominion over Himself, has given all the government of the whole creature into the hand and bosom of the Son; and indeed this has been done from eternity, but afterwards it has finally been made known by revelation and declaration. For the Son has always had this honor from eternity, but it was not made known until his name was spread throughout the world through the gospel.]

Secondly, this verse also serves to dismiss the law and the legal worship. For the Psalm does not say that one should worship in the temple at Jerusalem, but names another service. He says: "If you want to worship God, if you want to offer Him a pleasing sacrifice, and serve Him in such a way that you do something that is pleasing to Him, you must do nothing else but kiss this son. In this way you will serve God, and God will be reconciled with you. But this cannot be persuaded to the world. Therefore, Arius stands up and spreads his blasphemous teaching against the Son of God. The Turk considers it a great shame that we believe that Christ is the Son of God and worship him. Although the pope is wary of these blasphemies, he does not recognize Christ as the Son of God.

Son of God because he is not satisfied with his sacrifice, and teaches that we can accomplish with our works what the Son of God accomplished with his blood and death.

Therefore, we should be mindful of this testimony that this King is the Son of God, born of the Father in eternity, and presented to us that we should kiss him and serve him, that is, that we should firmly believe that we are reconciled to God through him, so that, although we rightly fear God's wrath because of our sins, we nevertheless hope for blessedness by trusting in this mediator. When we have rendered this service to the Son, the Father is satisfied and demands nothing more from us as far as reconciliation and the hope of eternal life are concerned. But the obedience that follows, because we do everything in faith in the Son of God, even though it is imperfect, still pleases God and has both physical and spiritual reward.

This is the brief epitome of the whole worship of God, which is exceedingly easy as far as outward works are concerned, for it does not consist in changing outward things. If a servant wants to be a Christian, it is not necessary for him to change his status; so also a worldly authority person. For with God there is no respect of person [Eph. 6, 9]. But it is necessary that the heart be changed, and that you, where before you almost despaired because of sin, now have the certain hope of forgiveness through Christ; that you, where before you delighted in sin, now hate sin and flee; that where before you were sluggish and negligent in obeying God, now you should do so with the greatest zeal and willingness, so that you do not offend God anywhere 1) with words or works 2c. In this way, the mind and heart must be changed so that you do not judge God according to your heart, but according to the word that the Son of God holds up to you. When you have done this, then reason can freely operate in its realm: you can take a wife,

You can govern your household, you can do this or that work to earn your living. God leaves all this to your judgment, that you order and govern it.

Thus, the form and manner of the right worship of God is quite simple, but the world does not obey; it prefers to change everything rather than its heart and conscience, to worship everything more easily than this king. A monk thinks that he does the highest service to God when he changes his dress, when he leaves his profession, when he hides in a monastery where he eats, drinks, sleeps in a new way 2c. In such a way he thinks to be born again and to become a new man, and yet only the outward behavior is changed; but the mind and the spirit remain the same; it remains the same blasphemous opinion that the wicked Cain had, since, while he was about to murder his brother, he nevertheless hoped to be in favor with God because of his sacrifice. But this is truly a shameful and blasphemous delusion. For GOD cares nothing whether you are circumcised or in the foreskin, just as He cares nothing whether you walk or stand on the path, whether you wear a white or a black garment. These are outward things, which each one may arrange as he pleases, if he only takes care of his neighbor, so that he does not offend him. Thus, God does not care whether you live under the worldly regime or in solitude; but that is a manifest sin, if you rely on your profession and choose another state according to your own will.

But he is concerned about this, yes, he commands and commands that you change your heart, that you instill in your conscience a new opinion and new thoughts of God, that you say: I recognize and adore the Son of God, the Lord Jehovah Christ, and because he is my mediator, I hope that through him I am reconciled to God and that my sins are forgiven. With such a heart I will go and till my field, do my work, take a wife, serve my Lord 2c. Such a service the Psalm demands in this place and such a form of worship it prescribes. But, as I said, the world does not accept the wholesome teaching. It considers it to be the

1) Erlanger: nee nbi instead of: neeudi.

right worship, if they change something by heart or in outward things. Thus, the nonsensical Anabaptists cry that they are right saints when they do not carry weapons, when they put on a gray skirt, when they hang their heads sadly. But is it not easy for every peasant to change these things? But that they trust in Christ and serve God with fear, the foolish people do not touch that with a finger.

And it is certain that no man who deals with laws or righteousnesses can perform this right service; not even with their thoughts can they attain it. For the teaching is revealed from heaven, which grows in no man's heart or head; the Holy Spirit must be the teacher and guide here. Since this can only be obtained through faith in Christ, but the works saints throw away faith and keep the law, it is impossible for them to perform this service. Therefore, as I have said, the Christian religion is exceedingly easy when one looks at the outward works, but when one looks at this spiritual service, it is exceedingly difficult. For this cannot be done unless the heart is changed. True religion, therefore, requires the heart and mind, not a work or other outward things, though these follow if you have the heart. For where the heart is, there is everything. He who loves you sincerely will not deny you money, not effort, not himself. And this is the cause that true religion is without hypocrisy [Jac. 3, 17.], and not hypocritical, as the Pharisaical, which is only external, does not change the heart.

Therefore, the right service of God is to kiss this Son, that is, to worship Him in such a way that one sees nothing in heaven and on earth but Him, nor trusts in anything else but Him, as the first commandment commands [Ex. 20:4]: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness, either of things in heaven above, or of things in the earth beneath, or of things in the waters under the earth." With this commandment, God has taken His people captive and bound them to spiritual sight, and has withdrawn them from all wandering thoughts; and yet they are in abeyance.

Godliness, as history testifies. For they judged that God would be praised if the creature he had created were praised. Hence came the worship of the sun, the moon, and the host of heaven, while God had expressly commanded that only the mercy seat should be worshipped. In this way we should also beware of the images of heaven and earth, and cling to the Son alone, so that we will surely grasp the Father and the whole Godhead. For Paul also says [Col. 2, 9]: "In Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Therefore, you will not find God in the sun, not in the moon, not in other creatures; only in the Son born of Mary will He be found. In Him alone is blessedness, grace and life; everything you think of God apart from Him is a vain thought and pure idolatry.

The papists do not know this. When they teach about the service of God, they either understand only the services they have chosen for themselves, or, if they are the least evil, they lead people to Moses and the obedience of the Law or the holy Ten Commandments. And it is true, GOD has prescribed the ten commandments for this reason, so that we may keep them. But if this obedience is most perfect, that is, as complete as it can be rendered only by men, we cannot rest in it; in this obedience we not only do not take hold of God, but even flee from God. But those who look to Christ find such a God before whom they do not fear, but whom they accept with reverence and a certain confidence in His mercy. Therefore, just as the holy Jews knew of no other God than the one who commanded that He be invoked at the mercy seat, just as they knew of no other worship than that which was held in the Temple, which was ordained for this purpose by God Himself, so we alone cling to the Son, find in Him the Father, receive life and blessedness in Him. This is our wisdom, which we Christians are, that we subdue the wandering thoughts of our hearts, and cling to the Son alone, and know of no God but the Son. For it is the Son who is the

after he is exalted. Those who either do not know him or have lost him are tossed about in the midst of the sea of perdition and cannot reach the harbor of salvation. On the other hand, those who have Christ and look upon him as upon the bronze serpent with a steady gaze, that is, those who believe that he was given for our sins according to the will of the Father, are safe from the devil and possess the true God, eternal life, righteousness and wisdom.

There is therefore great power in the word "kiss," for it means that we are to accept this Son with all our heart, and neither see nor hear anything else but Christ, namely the crucified One. But whoever has something else in mind in religion or seeks something higher, will deceive himself and miss the way to salvation. We should use our reason and wisdom for other things, to govern the household, to direct our works, to buy and sell; but because it is a matter of the service of God, then one must close all ways to reason, and adhere to this Son alone. In itself it is not evil to change one's clothes, as a monk does; nor is fasting to mortify the body 2c. For this we blame only in the respect that it is done with the ungodly delusion, as if these things were useful for obtaining the forgiveness of sins. If you get rid of this delusion, you will live forever, even if you keep the cap, if you only kiss the Son sincerely, that is, if you only base yourself on His merit and grace. This, therefore, is the head of the service of God, everything else being, as it were, only the tail; and yet the world pays no attention to this head, and puts its trust in the hypocritical alteration of outward things. Therefore the Holy Spirit adds:

Lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way.

The prophet sees that this teaching is despised in the world. Jews, Turks and all pagans judge that it is something quite incongruous that we worship a man who endures all the common sufferings of the flesh which

He was counted among the murderers and put on the cross. Although the papists are not offended by this weakness of Christ, they teach another way to life than Christ and his works. They do not deny Christ's sacrifice in words, but since they attribute to his works and sacrifices that they merit the forgiveness of sins, do they not thereby set up a different Christ from the one given to us by the Father, that he might be our righteousness and wisdom, our sanctification and redemption? Therefore, instead of the kiss which the Holy Spirit commands to be given to the Son, they kiss their masses, their fasts, their caps; but Christ they kiss with the Judas kiss. For they hate this doctrine and persecute it with every kind of cruelty.

This the Holy Spirit sees, therefore he warns and threatens: Either worship this one, or you shall know that you remain under the wrath. For if it is a question of how God is to be reconciled, how one can obtain forgiveness of sins: either kiss the Son, or you will perish; here there is no third (medium). Thus John proclaims [Cap. 3, 36.], "He that believeth not the Son, upon him abideth the wrath of GOtt." Likewise^ 18]: "He that believeth not is already judged," whether he be a king or a shepherd, a carthorse or a man of war, whether he be celibate or married, whether he be a physician or a lawyer: if he kiss not the Son, that is, if he have not set all hope of blessedness upon the Son, though he torment himself with fasting unto death, though he burn his body with fire, he shall perish in the wrath of God.

In this way the Holy Spirit comprehends the whole world in one word, with all its wisdom, righteousness, merits, worship, with all its adoration and mortification, and attributes everything to the kissing of the Son: If you kiss the Son, it is right; if not, you will perish in the way. For it will happen, he says, that the Son will finally be angry; now he offers you his kiss, so that he may be kissed by you again. For with very special love he takes

of the whole human race. For he cometh into our flesh, not to judge, not to condemn, but to kiss us, and to shew us the love that he hath toward us. Therefore, if you do not kiss him again, no worship of God, no righteousness, no wisdom will save you, but you will remain under wrath forever and perish in wrath. But the world does not care about these threats, it thinks it will turn out quite differently; it hopes for the grace of God through its works and righteousness; but in vain. For the judgment is clear: "He who does not believe will be condemned" [Marc. 16, 16].

The seventy interpreters have translated: Lest ye perish from the righteous way (*de via justa*). Therefore the interpreters made a difference; the one is a good way, the other an evil one. But this is contrary to the Hebrew. For there it simply says, "That ye perish not in the way." The opinion, therefore, is this, that the Holy Spirit simply forbids that we should not trust in any ways that are ours, though they may have a beautiful appearance and seem to be very good. The kingdom of the pope has a great appearance; the civil rights are also rightly praised as an excellent gift of God and necessary for public tranquility; a Carthusian also has a beautifully shining path on which he walks; so also the other orders have their certain paths. But all that there is in the whole world, if you do not kiss the Son, is nothing but wrath and condemnation, and wrath will cause these ways to be stopped and to perish. For if the worship of the ancient people could not stand, since this Son had been rejected and rejected; if those who had the covenant, the legislation, the worship, the priesthood, the temple, perished at the same time as their ways: what shall we say of the self-chosen ways, without God's word, such as those of the papists are?

Therefore the emphasis lies on the word "ways". For he does not say, "You will perish in error," but "in the way," that is, the way that is necessary to attain salvation.

The worship and works you have chosen for yourself will be your undoing. But it is a pity that a monk who does nothing day and night but torture his body does nothing with this diligence but is thrown into the fire of hell. Thus the Jews, who fight with great zeal for the law and the sacrifices, have a way on which they think they will get straight into life, but they perish on this way, so that they wander about astray in soul and body. Thus the Roman empire had a way on which it thought it could overcome all dangers. But all these perished on their way and with their way, because they did not kiss the Son. Nowadays, we also see by God's grace that the Pabst perishes before our eyes with his many ways. For the wrath of this Son is a divine wrath and has power; it is not a vain or powerless wrath; he wants to be taken for God and worshipped, or threatens destruction.

But this reinforces the threat that the Holy Spirit adds that this wrath will soon burn. For with this he understands both that this wrath is an almighty one and that it is very near. When it passes away, it seems to be very far away, not only for those who do not experience this wrath, but also for the godly who are tormented and martyred in the meantime. But the verdict is certain: "He will soon burn," that is, he will certainly come, and he will come when they speak: It is peace and has no need. Thus the Jews did not think that their doom was so near. In our time, too, the papacy began to fall when it was most secure. Even now I do not know what hope the enemies of the gospel have, but it will happen according to the saying [Ps. 55:24]: "The wicked will not bring their ways to the half." Now the popes have been trying to seize the Roman Empire for more than six hundred years, but they have been deceived in their hopes, and all of them have fallen in their attempts, most shamefully those who were best equipped with wisdom and cunning.

But this is also a cause of the judgment and the fall of the wicked, that even though the Son will soon be angry, the godly also press for this fall with their prayers. Therefore, as Christ says about the unjust judge and the widow [Luc. 18, 7.], God will also save His elect who cry out to Him day and night, and soon He will do so. So it is said in the Revelation of John [Cap. 2, 5]. He will come soon. To us, of course, who suffer in the meantime, the wrath seems to be far delayed and slow, for the hope that is withdrawn is painful to the heart; but for the wicked it comes very quickly. For they are then assailed by it when they think they are safest. Therefore they seem to perish in a moment. Now that they hear these threats, they surely despise them, as is said in the fable of a highwayman. When he robbed a wanderer, and the latter reproached him that he would have to suffer punishment for it on the last day, the robber said: "Well, if the punishment is postponed so long, then it is well with me. Now that I have this hope, give me your shirt as well as your skirt."

Such people are all the wicked. But when the punishment seizes them, then they sing this foolish song: I would not have meant that. When Lot faithfully admonished the people of Sodom, they even attacked him with invective. They said [Gen. 19, 9.]: You came in as a stranger and want to rule us? Then, of course, they were safe. But when the sun went out in the morning, they were consumed by fire from heaven and the earth swallowed them up. This is how this wrath shows up, which is coming soon, and before the wicked can believe it.

This is therefore an exceedingly grave and terrifying threat, which would kill us by the mere remembrance of it, if the Holy Spirit had not added the comfort of which we are in need. For he makes a distinction between those who kiss this Son and those who do not kiss him. Now those who will not kiss this Son, but are puffed up because of their righteousness, he is angry with them and threatens them with destruction. But those who kiss the Son, who are in fear because of their sins, and yet for the sake of the Son, he is angry with them.

Those who have hope for the sake of God are blessed, he says. So also the angels at the tomb of the Lord make a distinction, when they say to the women [Matth. 28, 5.], "Do not be afraid." For they had not come to frighten those who loved and sought Christ, but to frighten the guardians who had promised their help to the Pharisees and chief priests to suppress Christ's honor. Now as the persons are different, so are the sermons. The sermon of mercy belongs to the lost and afflicted, for these must be raised up. But the sermon of wrath and punishment belongs to the hard and secure, for these must be crushed with the hammer of the law. Thus there are, as it were, two worlds: one of the devil, in which people are safe and hopeful, not caring about God and the Gospel. These are warned by the Holy Spirit that they should throw off their security, or it will happen that they perish with their ways. The other world is Christ's. In it are the afflicted and misfortune-stricken people who are tormented by the consciousness of their sin, and fear the punishment of sins, death and the wrath of God, and yet, seeing that the Son of God has become the sacrifice for sin, hope in the divine mercy. These the Holy Spirit comforts with the glorious word: "Blessed are all those who trust in Him" or hope.

But at the same time he teaches about the right service of God, that serving God is nothing else than putting all one's trust in this king and relying on his help and support against death, sin and the devil. Hence the word "trust" explains the kiss of which he said above, as if to say: Look to this King, be joyful and of good cheer, and take hold in your heart good thoughts from GOD through this Son, who is presented to you by GOD the Father, that you should kiss Him. For all the other things in the world will make you sad; they will bring you neither comfort nor help against death and sin, not even the most holy life, your good works or your righteousness. But in this Son you will find the source of blessedness and all comfort. Therefore do not trust in

but also hold fast that if you trust in him you will be blessed.

In this way, this psalm describes the heavenly religion and the right services, with the true church and its head Christ, that although the church is secret and hidden in the world, and the devil and the ungodly, even our flesh seem to rule, yet the church by faith

In this King, finally, triumph and win against the devil and the whole world, according to these words: "Blessed are all those who trust in him. Therefore, in the great tribulations with which the poor Church, oppressed as it were on all sides, has to struggle today, we too should hold on to this consolation with both hands, that since we trust in Christ, the Son of God, we are blessed. Amen.

11. interpretation of the eighth psalm.*)

Anno 1537.

[Preface by D. Georgius Cölestinus.]

To the noble, strict and honorable Curt von Arnim, churfürstlichen Brandenburgischen Hofmarschalle, and Berndt von Arnim, Gebrüdern, Erbsässen zu Brenzenburg 2c., my favorable gentlemen,

God's grace, peace and blessings before, with the offering of my services. Noble, strict, honorable, magnanimous gentlemen! The suffering and death of Christ, and his joyful resurrection, are especially regarded at this time, because of the fact that the time exists in this way, and the ancients especially meant that the people of the two articles of the death and resurrection of Christ should be taught needfully and thoroughly. For he who has a right and good knowledge of the two articles, and feels and senses their power and effect in his heart through the Word, understands and makes use of what Paul says in Romans 4:25: "Christ died for our sins, and was raised for our righteousness."

But because I find in the work that E. E. not only the sermon, God's word to him, but also the word of God to him.

Joh. 6, 12. Gather the rest of the pieces so that nothing perishes.

I not only love Luther himself, but also Luther, the man of God, writings and interpretations with all my heart, and prefer them to all other books and writings (next to the Bible), no matter what their names may be; therefore, I also prefer and accept the pure, divine and Lutheran doctrine of the preachers, and promote them and theirs. E. this Psalm, such as Mr. Andreas Poach 1) compiled from Mr. Luther's and Rorari's writings, and had it sent to me for the fee, among other causes, for this reason, so that

First of all, the dear gifts of God, even if some of them were less than nothing and still respected them, would not perish, but would be brought forth to E. E. and many pious hearts for teaching and comfort;

1) Marginal gloss of the original: Andreas Poach, pastor of the Augustinians in Erfurt. Note, Georg Rorarius copied this psalm from Luther's mouth, but Andreas Poach inherited Rorarii's writings.

*Luther presented this interpretation in 1537 (whether in public lectures or sermons or in the circle of friends at home, we do not know), and Georg Rörer copied it. Only in 1572 Andreas Poach, pastor of the Augustinians in Erfurt, who had inherited Rörer's writings, printed this interpretation from them in Mühlhausen. Olearius, p. 56, gives this edition thus: "Der VIII Psalm gepredigt ock. ad ^uckr. koad. Mühlhausen, 1572. 4. previously never printed." After that, Georg Cölestinus, provost of Cologne on the Spree, organized a new edition in 1577 under the title: "Der echte Psalm Davids, gepredigt und ausgelegt durch den theuren Mann Gottes, D. Martin Luther, Anno 1537. Ist weder in Wittenbergischen, Jenischen, noch Eislebischen Theilen: darum frommen Christen zu gut zu berecht." Finally, [1. Joh. Ulrich Hildebrand, Diaconus zu St. Annen zu Augsburg, provided a single edition in 1728 under the title: "Des theuren Mannes Gottes Lutheri treffliches Zeugniß von der Herrlichkeit des Gnadenreiches in seiner geistreichen Erklärung über den achten Psalm." In the Gesamtausgaben it is found: in the Halleschen Theil, p. 420; in the Leipzig edition, vol. VI, p. 51; and in the Erlangen edition, vol. 39, p. I. We give the text, like Walch and the Erlangen, according to the edition of Cölestinus.

on the other hand, that I confirm E. E. in this, and also give others the same reason to esteem Luther's writings highly, dear and valuable. For experience shows how spiritual they are, and how cold the other writings are in comparison;

Thirdly, by the work itself, to make known the high gift of God, which He gave us through the man;

finally, E. E. my faithful, good-willed and Christian mind and heart, to serve the same for its church and welfare, hereby declared before God and all the world; in the complete hope that God, who until now has attended us with His grace, will further give us to think and do what may be beneficial and salutary to His divine honors and to many people. For we are ever

not born to ourselves alone; so let us not live to ourselves alone (sed Deo, ecclesiae, rei- publicae et nostris), but to God, to His afflicted Church, to the common good, and to those of us who are related to us by nature and spirit. So then we may live and die blessed in true faith in Christ, and have been well here. This will help E. E., me and all of us, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, amen, amen. I entrust E. E. and all yours to his protection, who will preserve and keep them to eternal bliss, Amen. Date Berlin, Sunday in Mid-Lent [March 17], Anno 1577.

E. E. willing

Georgius Cölestinus, D.

The eighth Psalm of David.

1 Let us speak a little of our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For he hath commanded us to remember him until he come. So he also deserved it for us, that we should never forget him. So that we may have cause to speak of him, let us take before us the eighth Psalm of David, which was made by our Lord Jehovah Christ, and let us repeat the words of the same prophet as he speaks to us.

[A psalm of David to be sung on the gith.]

O Lord our Sovereign, how glorious is your name in all the earth, when people give thanks to you in heaven.

Out of the mouth of young children and babes thou hast wrought a power for the sake of thine enemies, to destroy the enemy and the revenger.

For I will see the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you prepare.

What is man that you remember him, and man's child that you take care of him?

You will let him be abandoned by God for a little while; but with honors and adornment you will crown him.

Thou hast made him lord over the work of thy hands. You have put everything under his feet,

Sheep and oxen all around, plus the wild animals,

The birds under the sky, and the fish in the sea, and what goes in the sea...

O LORD our Ruler, how glorious is your name in all the earth.

This psalm was made by the prophet David, as the title also shows that David was the master of this psalm: "A Psalm of David. But it is written in the title: "To be sung on the Githith. The word Githith is also found in Psalm 81, item, Psalm 84. The Chaldean text always uses the word Cinnara for it. Therefore I think, Githith was an instrument and string play, a harp or violin. In David's time, musica was not as artistic as it is now, in our time. One instrument, as a psaltery of ten strings, was almost the highest and most magnificent and artistic. The other common instruments have had three or four strings. Now, however, the musica has risen beyond measure. We have various and much ornate instruments, since in David's time there were only psalteries, harps, violins, pipes, cymbals 2c.

(3) But that it is also written in the title, "To be sung from the githith," is to be understood thus: A priest or Levite sang this psalm, and another played the harp or violin. David had appointed four thousand praisers of the Lord, and divided them into four orders, that they should praise, give thanks and praise God with all kinds of strings before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. Therefore it had to go on throughout the whole year with singing and sounding, with cymbals, psalteries and harps; as can be seen in 1 Chron. 24, 5. 26, 1. He himself, David, made the songs to be sung to praise and glorify God in his works. That is why the book is called *Sepher Tehillim*, that is, a book of praise or thanksgiving, because there are many psalms of thanksgiving in it, which praise and extol God for all kinds of good deeds, although there are also many prophecies and promises for the pious and urges against the wicked mixed in. The priests and Levites were commanded to sing such songs of thanksgiving, made by David, and to sound them with strings. Let this be said recently of the title.

(4) This psalm is one of the beautiful psalms, and a glorious prophecy of Christ, wherein David describes Christ's person and kingdom, and teaches who Christ is, what kingdom he has, how it is granted, where this King reigns, that is, in all the earth, yet in heaven; and how his kingdom is established and established, that is, by word and faith alone, without sword and armor; and so he declares:

Lord, our sovereign, how glorious is your name in all the earth, where they give thanks to you in heaven.

(5) He turns to the king and addresses him as if to say: "Before you become king on earth, praise and thanksgiving will be given to you only in the small corner of the Jewish land and in Jerusalem; but after your future there will be another sound, singing, praise and thanksgiving; not in the small corner, in the Jewish land alone, but in all the lands of the whole world, as far as the sky is. Herewith he prophesies and proclaims, soon in the beginning of this psalm, that God's praise

and praise shall be driven on earth, in all the world, by this King who is to come: "Lord, our Ruler."

6 But he calls this king a "Lord" and "ruler". These are two names. The word "Herr" (Jehovah) is not assigned to anyone in the whole holy scripture, but only to the divine majesty. For it is the great name of God, which is written in our German Bible in large letters, as distinguished from the other names. No creature on earth, indeed, no angel in heaven is ascribed the name *HErr* (Jehovah), but God alone. Therefore it is a special, own name of God, and is called: the right, true, eternal God.

(7) But the word *Adon*, lord or ruler, is a common name, which the Scriptures also use of princes and rulers. For it is not called Lord, as God is called Lord; but as men are lords and reign. Thus Sarah calls Abraham her lord: "I am old, and my lord (*Adoni*) is also old", Gen. 18, 12. And Joseph calls Potiphar, Pharaoh's chamberlain and court master (who had bought him from the Ishmaelites), his lord, Gen. 39, 8. And Joseph himself is called lord by the Egyptians, as he himself confesses and says: "God has set me as lord (*Adon*) in all Egypt", Gen. 45, 8. And Aaron calls Moses his lord: "My lord (*Adoni*) let not his anger be kindled", Ex. 32, 22. And the like in many places more. Therefore the word "ruler" does not mean the divine majesty in its secret heavenly nature, as the Father is and is called LORD and God, and the Son is and is called LORD and God, likewise also the Holy Spirit is and is called LORD and God, but the human nature and the outward regiment of this king against us men.

(8) Since this king is called "Lord, our ruler," it follows that he must be true God and true man at the same time. For if he were not true God, he could not be and be called Lord; for God does not want to give his name and glory to anyone else, Isa. 42:8: "I the Lord, that is my name, and I will not give my glory to anyone else, nor my fame to idols. How-

Therefore, if he were not truly man, he could not be our ruler, since our ruler must also be man, because he is supposed to possess such a kingdom and dominion over men. So now this king is "Lord", that is, God; and our lord or "ruler", that is, man. That is, to be like God, and yet also to be man.

(9) It follows that this king has dominion, not only as the true eternal God, in and with himself, since he has no need of dominion or subjects, but also as a true, natural man, in relation to us men on earth. In that he is Lord and God, he has no need of dominion; but in that he has become man, he has need of dominion, otherwise he could not bear the name and be called ruler over men. He came to earth and became man for this reason, so that he could deal with us, be our ruler, regent and authority, and we could be his dominion and subjects. He is Lord and God according to his eternal, divine nature and essence; he is ruler according to his human nature and according to his office and kingdom, so that he is our sovereign and we are his subjects.

(10) Christ then, true, eternal God, with your Father and Holy Spirit, in one inseparable divine being, and true, natural man, came to earth, served us, and prepared for us a kingdom in which we might enjoy him, so that he might not only remain in the Godhead for himself, but also become like us and be our ruler. As also the 95th Psalm, v. 6. f. says: "Come, let us worship, and kneel, and fall down before the Lord who made us. For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and sheep of his hands."

(11) But David firmly maintains the unity of the person. He gives the King Christ two names, a great divine name, "Lord", and a small human name, "Ruler". Thus he indicates the two natures in Christ, divine and human, and yet he does not speak of two, but of one Lord and Ruler, so that he indicates the unity of the person, that Christ the Lord, our Ruler, is one person. He distinguishes the natures, and

gives a special name to each nature, but he does not separate the person, but keeps the person undivided. To this prophet, who prophesies of Christ through the Holy Spirit, let us repeat what he says to us, namely, that he is the Lord, the ruler of us all, and yet not two rulers, not two Messiahs, not two kings, but one Lord, our ruler, one Messiah and King.

(12) These are three high articles that David touches and confesses here in short words. The first, that this king has two natures, that is, that he is true God and man. The other, that he is one undivided person, not two persons, two kings, two lords and rulers, but one person, one king, one lord and ruler. For since he assigns God's name and glory to this lord or ruler, that is, man, and calls him Lord, that is, God, the same Lord and man must be neither another god nor idol, but the true natural God, with your Father and Holy Spirit. Again, because he calls this: Lord, that is, God, human quality, and calls him ruler, as men are rulers and rule, so the same Lord and God must be right man, and equal to men of all things, except sin. Item, because he brings this Lord and ruler together, and says that this Lord, our ruler, is not two, but one, so that this Lord is just the same our ruler, and this our ruler is just the same Lord: so this Lord, our ruler, must be one person. The third article is that this Lord, that is, God, should become man, and receive dominion, authority and honor from: Father over all. But what kind of dominion and kingdom the Father gives to this man and ruler, he will say later.

How glorious is the name in all lands.

(13) Hitherto he has described the person, and thus pictured this king, that he is true, eternal God and true man, a bodily lord and ruler over us men. Now he bursts into his kingdom and says that this Lord, our ruler, has a glorious name in all the world. What this name is, teaches

St. Paul Phil. 2, 9-11, where he says: "God has exalted Christ and given him a name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus all knees in heaven and on earth and under the earth should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And Rom. 1, 4. where he says that God the Father raised His Son from the dead and glorified Him through the Holy Spirit in words, signs and wonders in all the world, so that it might be known and known that He is the Son of God, whom He made heir and head over all things, Eph. 1, 22. David sees in this same excellent nature that from the small corner of Jerusalem such a sermon is to come, which is to resound throughout the whole world with all power and glory, that Jesus Christ, true God and man, is such a Lord and ruler, to whom, even after mankind, everything is subject, angels, men, sin, death, the world, the devil, hell, and what may be called in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.

(14) This may be a name that is exquisitely great and glorious beyond measure. Who ever heard of such a great and glorious name being ascribed to a man on earth as is ascribed to this Lord and Ruler? The Roman emperor and king, the pope, yes, the Turkish emperor, are all card kings against this: HErrn and ruler. They may have great titles and names, they may be called mighty, invincible, most gracious 2c., but this king is preached in all lands that he is true God and man, a mighty Lord and ruler, to whom all things must be subject and subservient, heaven, earth, and all that is within, angels, men, devils, death, life, sin, justice 2c.

(15) The prophet David is astonished at this great and glorious name, he cannot marvel at it enough, nor does he know how to speak of it or how to call it with great wonder. He says that it is too high and too glorious a thing to preach, sing and say about this king in all the world. Ah, dear king, he says, how great a lord and ruler are you! How glorious a name you have in all the lands!

Where shall I get words to speak of it? I cannot achieve it with thoughts, let alone talk it out with words. You have such a glorious name, King, in all the world.

(16) The greatness and glory of this name demands that we marvel at it. If a physician were invented on earth, who could cure one or two diseases and pestilences that cannot be cured, even who could save a few people from death, what praise and name do you think such a physician would have in the whole world? If a prince or king had power and authority to make a blind man see, to cast out a devil, to wake up a dead man, everyone would sing about him and say: "This is a gentleman! If the Roman emperor could cleanse some leprous man from leprosy, if he were not emperor, he would soon have to become emperor. But what would all this be in comparison with what this king and ruler has done for the children of men, and is still doing daily, and will do in all the world until the last day? since he has forgiven many sinners their sins, and is still forgiving them daily; made many blind men see, cleansed many lepers, raised many from death and made them alive, and at the last day will raise all men and make them alive? Therefore, it is an excellent, glorious name, at which everyone should be amazed, and the richer the spirit and the higher the understanding, the greater the amazement will be among Christians.

Since you are thanked in heaven.

017 What is this, that he saith this King shall be Lord and Ruler over us men, and we men shall be upon the earth; and that his name shall be magnified in all the earth by the giving of thanks which is done in heaven? How does one give thanks in heaven because his name is preached on earth? How does this rhyme? How can his name be gloriously preached by us men in all lands, and yet at the same time his praise and thanks be given by us men in heaven? We humans cannot be down on earth and up in heaven at the same time. How is it, then, that he mixes the earth and heaven together? Answer: It is spoken after the manner and

The nature of the kingdom of Christ, which is a strange, wonderful kingdom; not an earthly, perishable, mortal kingdom, but an eternal, heavenly, imperishable kingdom. The citizens of Christ's kingdom are earthly, perishable, mortal men, living and dwelling in lands scattered to and fro on earth, and yet at the same time citizens in heaven.

How does this work? Or, how is it about this kingdom? Listen how this king himself speaks about it before the governor Pilato, Joh. 18, 36: "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But now my kingdom is not from hence." And soon after, v. 37: "I am a king. I was born and came into the world to be a witness of the truth. He that is of the truth heareth my voice." Therewith he distinguishes his kingdom from the kingdom of the world and teaches how his kingdom is formed. The emperor's kingdom, he says, is of this world, belongs to this world, and comes to an end with this world; but my kingdom is not of this world, does not belong to this world, even though it already exists in this world, and does not come to an end with this world, but belongs to another world, and remains eternal. The Roman kingdom remains well before my kingdom, if it only wants itself. For my kingdom is not established, strengthened or preserved by outward power and the sword of the body, as the kingdom of the world is established, strengthened and preserved by bodily power and the sword, but is established, strengthened and preserved by the word, faith and the Spirit. The world is full of deceitfulness, hypocrisy, lies, falsehood and unfaithfulness. All outward, worldly regiments, even if they are founded with virtue, honesty and justice, and are as good as they can be, are still full of falsehood and lies before God, and there is no true, righteous being in them that can stand before God. But my kingdom is a kingdom of truth. For for this purpose I was born and came into the world, that I might preach the truth, and that men might hear and accept the truth, so that they might become true, righteous men who belong to another world, and whose works are done in God.

Therefore David will say, O Lord our sovereign, thou art a King of kings, and Lord of lords; thou only hast immortality, and dwellest in a light which no man can approach: thy kingdom shall be as far as the earth, and yet thy kingdom shall be an everlasting heavenly kingdom. You are a king in heaven, and yet you will have your kingdom on earth, yes, even under the earth, in hell. For there is nothing so high and low, neither in heaven, nor on earth, nor under the earth, that you cannot have power and authority and help. Therefore those who on earth, in your kingdom, will preach your name, praise and give thanks to you, will be in heaven, even though on earth they are scattered throughout the earth.

20. Therefore all these things are spoken after the manner of the kingdom of Christ, which is a kingdom of heaven and eternal life, a kingdom of truth, a kingdom of peace, a kingdom of joy, righteousness, safety, blessedness, and all good things, in which kingdom Christ, the King of glory, exalted at the right hand of God, and made head over all things, his Christians, through the gospel and the Holy Spirit, ruling in faith, under sin, death, the devil, the world, hell, and by the power of his kingdom, word, Spirit, and faith, taking them to heaven, even if they are still alive in the flesh on earth.

(21) These things the prophet foreknew at that time, what manner of king Christ would be, and what manner of reign and kingdom he would have. The Jews are still waiting for Messiah today, that he will come with a great traveling witness, with many warriors, and will establish a worldly empire, and in such a kingdom will distribute much gold and silver, and help the Jews to great honor, power and glory. But David describes the Messiah much differently, and says: he, the king, will be his "Lord, our ruler", and his kingdom will be a glorious being, so that his name will be preached in all countries and thanks will be given to him in heaven. There it is not said of gold and silver, but of preaching and word, of praise and thanksgiving in lands and heaven. This is the purpose of this ruler's dominion and kingdom, that we may begin here on earth to be in heaven, and enter heaven fully, and abide therein forever. This kingdom

helps us in heaven, here, according to the spirit and soul, even if our body is still for a time in the land on earth; but there it helps us in body and soul, in revelation and perception. For we were not baptized into Christ for this reason, nor do we believe in him for this reason, that we should enjoy his food and drink, money and goods on earth. For he gives us these things only, and has set up and ordained another kingdom for us, where we are to receive such things from him; but for this reason we were baptized into him, and for this reason we believe in him, that we may go to heaven and be eternally saved. Here on earth a Christian lives according to his body like another man, eats and drinks, works and manages his business; but his heart, mind and thoughts are set on that he may be eternally blessed in heaven, and be sure of such hope.

(22) Let us be well aware that the Lord our ruler has established and prepared such a dominion and kingdom, in which we are already in heaven according to our minds, hearts and souls, even though we are scattered to and fro in the countries according to our bodies. So also St. Paul says Phil. 3, 20. 21.: "Our walk is in heaven, from whence also we wait for the Savior Jesus Christ the Lord, who shall transfigure our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorified body, according to the working, that he may also make all things subject unto him." Our citizenship or civil being, he says, is not here on earth, but in heaven; there we have our right being and life. The emperor and pope, with his being, have nothing to do there, but Jesus Christ, the Lord, has to do there. In the same being we are citizens and heirs of God, fellow brothers and fellow heirs of Christ; yes, we are already in it with the heart, according to the spirit and faith. For, as the infant faith teaches us, we believe in a holy Christian church, resurrection of the flesh and eternal life. Therefore, we have this firm hope and are certain that we will be resurrected on the last day and possess eternal life.

That is, to live rightly in heaven, not with the body, but with the heart and soul, in faith and hope. Our heart has by power of the Holy Spirit, with the

We have to wait until our old maggot's sack is completely cleansed and comes after it on the last day. Now the flesh still clings to us, and our soul is still in a dark dungeon, so that it cannot see the glory of our civil being and inheritance in heaven. But when the dungeon will be broken, then we will see it, not in pieces, through a mirror, in a dark word, but completely, and face to face, as St. Paul says 1 Cor. 13:12.

(24) David saw and knew this in his spirit; therefore he speaks so joyfully of it, makes this glorious prophecy of Christ and his kingdom, and wishes with all his heart that he would experience it, that this prophecy would be fulfilled. But he did not experience it. But we have the fulfillment of such prophecy. For the name of this ruler goes forth with joyful resounding in all lands through the preaching of the gospel. But all devout Christians wish to see him in person. We have the name, but we do not have the person, unless we hear through the word in the sermon that he has come, born of a virgin, risen from the dead, and has established an eternal kingdom, into which kingdom we are placed through baptism, and are already in heaven according to the soul. Now when we enter the grave, and shall rest until the last day, then shall the Lord our Ruler, whose name we preach in all lands, and to whom we give thanks in heaven, say unto us, Come forth out of the graves, and possess eternal life in heaven even after the body.

(25) Understand, then, that David rhymes the lands and the heavens together, saying, Let the name of our ruler be glorious in all the earth, and let thanks be given to him in heaven. For Christ's kingdom is on earth in all lands, and yet at the same time in heaven, since it is not an earthly, physical, mortal kingdom, but an eternal kingdom; hence it is also called "kingdom of heaven" in the Gospel. Whoever is received into this kingdom is in heaven according to spirit and soul, even though he is already on earth according to body and flesh. The

The soul has its heavenly food. For it is not nourished by the bodily bread that grows from the earth, as the body is, but must have another kind of food, namely, the bread of life that comes from heaven, John 6:48, 50. Where is the kitchen and the cellar where the soul's food and drink are found? In heaven, that is, in Christendom on earth, where the Lord our ruler has his kingdom, and which Christendom belongs to in heaven. There our soul nourishes itself and enjoys the heavenly goods.

26 He turns to the king and says, "O Lord our ruler, your name is glorious in all the earth, and they give you thanks in heaven"; that is, your little group gives thanks to you, which is scattered in all the earth, but at the same time is in heaven. For as thy kingdom is on earth, and yet at the same time is in heaven; so also thy little, poor company, after thy body, is scattered on earth, and yet, after thy heart, soul, and spirit, is in heaven. Your kingdom is on earth, and yet it is not an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly kingdom; thus, your believers' being and life on earth is not earthly, but a heavenly being in heaven. Their thanksgiving and praise, even though it takes place in all countries where your name is preached, is still a heavenly thanksgiving and praise. For the soul, enlightened by God's spirit, drives such praise and thanksgiving. And this is also true. Where there is no faith and knowledge of Christ, there is only earthly praise and thanksgiving, as one learns from the Popes and Turks; even though they fast, pray, praise and give thanks a lot, it is still only earthly, carnal things and human nature; there is no spirit, nor anything that belongs in heaven.

No one can speak of this more than the holy apostles. St. Paul says Col. 3, 3, 4: "Your life is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ your life shall be manifested, then shall ye also be manifested with him in glory." And St. John says 1 John 3:2: "Beloved, we are now God's children, and has not yet appeared what we shall be. But we know when it shall appear, that we shall be like Him, for I shall see Him as He is." They could not speak of it more finely and sweetly. A Christian and believer

The child of God is in heaven, but it is still hidden and does not appear; devils and men do not see it; indeed, the contradiction appears even before our eyes. But it will be revealed and appear in its time. Therefore let them that are the children of God go forth, praising and extolling the name of Christ in all the earth, and giving thanks to him in heaven.

V. 3. out of the mouth of the young children and infants thou hast prepared a power for the sake of thine enemies, to destroy the enemy and the avenger.

28 In this verse he describes the dominion, and shows what kind of dominion and kingdom it is, how and by what means the Lord our ruler establishes his kingdom, namely through the mouth of men; what kind of people he needs for it, infants and children; how he attacks it even foolishly before the world; and what he accomplishes with it, namely, that he destroys the enemy and the avenger.

29. He calls Christ's reign or kingdom "a power", half of his strength and might. For the Hebrew word *Os* means strength, power, force. Often it is also called a kingdom in the holy Scriptures, as Gen. 49, 3.: "Reuben, my first son, you are my strength and my first power, the chief in sacrifice, and the chief in the kingdom." Ps. 110, 2.: *Virgam virtutis tuae mittet Dominus ex Zion*, "the LORD will send the scepter of thy power, or of thy kingdom, out of Zion." So it is also used here: "You have prepared a power", which is a power to rule and reign. Thou hast prepared a mighty dominion, and established a strong and mighty kingdom, which shall stand firm and be established against all the power of the world, yea, against all the gates of hell.

(30) By what does he establish such power and kingdom, and what kind of people does he need for it? "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings," he says, "you have established a power. Thou hast established a power, or kingdom, full of might and violence against sin, death, the devil, and the world; prepared, not by bodily weapons, armor, swords, or guns, but by the mouths of men who are infants.

are babes and sucklings. This is the way in which Christ's kingdom is established, not by human power, wisdom, counsel, or strength, but by word and gospel preached through babes and sucklings. The Turkish emperor strengthens and fortifies his kingdom with the sword; the pope does likewise; but Christ establishes, strengthens, fortifies his kingdom by the word of God alone.

31 He does not call "infants" young children who cannot speak (for if they are to lead and preach the word, they must be able to speak), but bad, simple, silly people who are like infants, that is, who put all reason aside, grasp and accept the word with simple faith, and let themselves be led and guided by God, like children. Such are also the best disciples and teachers in Christ's kingdom, as he himself says Matth. 11, 25: "I praise you, Father and Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes." And Ps. 19, 8. David says: "The testimony of the Lord makes the foolish wise." And Ps. 119:130: "When thy word is revealed, it rejoiceth, and maketh wise the simple."

He does not call "infants" those who lie at their mother's breasts and sing, but those who are like infants, that is, those who cling to the pure, unadulterated word, without all addition of human dreams and thoughts. For just as a singing newborn child is satisfied with its mother's milk, and neither desires nor seeks any more food than its mother's milk, so these desire and seek no more food for their souls than the pure, unadulterated gospel. Thus says St. Peter, 1 Ep. 2, 2: "Be eager for the sensible, pure milk, as the little children now born." He calls the gospel sensible, that is, spiritual milk, which must not be grasped with the carnal mind, but with pure faith. Therefore, the word "infants" excludes all human reasoning in matters of faith. The word "infants" excludes all falsification of the word and false addition of human thoughts.

Why and for what purpose does Christ establish such power and kingdom? What does he want to accomplish with it? "You have established a power," he says.

"For the sake of your enemies, that you may destroy the enemy and the avenger. Therefore it is for you to do: You have an enemy, and an avenging enemy, you will destroy him, completely destroy him, and give him the holy evening. (For this is actually the Hebrew word Hashbith sabbatisare, seu ad interuiccionem usque destruere). For this purpose you have established this power; this is what you want to accomplish with it, that the enemy perishes.

34 By "enemy" and "avenger" he understands the devil and his bride, the world, and all that is great and high in the world; as was the synagogue of the Jewish people, which crucified and killed Christ; item, the Roman empire, which violently resisted Christ and his kingdom; and still today is the Mahometan and Turkish empire, which daily opposes Christ and his church. The devil is so hostile to Christ that he would like to destroy him to the ground. But since he cannot gain anything from Christ (for even if the devil stabs Christ in the heels, crucifies and tortures him, he still crushes the head of the woman's seed, Christ, and destroys his kingdom and power [Gen. 3:15]), he attacks, persecutes and torments the whole of Christendom and every Christian in particular, and is so fiercely angry that he does not cease to harm Christ's church with lies and murder; as we see and experience every day. For the sake of such enemies, Christ has wrought a power out of the mouths of babes and sucklings.

35 Now it is a marvelous thing that Christ destroys the enemy and the avenger by the power of the mouth of babes and sucklings. For the enemy and the avenger is a strong and mighty spirit, which is God and prince in the world, having a strong and lasting kingdom, and under him many other spirits, every one of which is stronger than all the men of the earth. On the other hand, the underage and infants are poor, weak people, caught in the power of the enemy, because through Adam's fall and sin all people have come into death and the devil's tyranny. What can they do in such weakness and imprisonment against the enemy and the avenger? Infants and babies will offer little resistance,

and little break off such powerful, strong spirits, and such great, mighty tyrants on earth, who ride to the court of the devil in his service, raging against Christ and his church, especially because they should not wield a sword, but only fight with their mouths. Why does he not send the heavenly spirits and princes, Gabriel, Michael and other angels, who could strongly resist and break the enemy?

Answer: The Lord our sovereign did not use Gabriel or Michael for this purpose, but from the mouths of babes and sucklings he wanted to create a power. For because the enemy's malice is great, and his wrath fierce, this ruler delights and pleases to scorn [the] spirit so wicked, fierce, and proud, and to mock him in the same manner. Therefore, since he wants to bring down the power, he throws himself so low, becomes man, yes, throws himself under all men; as it is written Ps. 22:7: "I am a worm, and no man, a mockery of men and contempt of the people." Therefore go in poverty, as he himself says Matth. 8, 20.: "The foxes have pits, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." In such bodily weakness and poor stature He attacks the enemy, allows Himself to be crucified and killed, and through His cross and death He wipes out the enemy and the avenger of revenge; as St. Paul says Col. 2:15: "He stripped the principalities and powers, and made a public display of them, and made a triumph of them by Himself."

37 After that, having risen from the dead, having ascended to heaven, and desiring to establish power through the mouths of men, he sends his apostles and disciples, simple-minded, foolish people. He himself calls them sheep, Matth. 10, 16: "Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves." And the whole gospel testifies that the disciples of the Lord always presented themselves as children. When the Lord spoke here, they understood there. Therefore they were sheep in the truth. Now it is ludicrous and foolishly begun (as all reason cannot judge otherwise), that he should have said such silly, unrealistic things.

He is the one who attaches all the people to such clever, highly confident spirits and sets the weakest on earth against the mighty lords of the race and the strongest spirits under heaven. Why does he not use the most powerful angels in heaven, the angel Gabriel with his angels, who is the supreme marshal and wields the sword; hence his name, Gabriel, which means God's might or power? But he does not do this, but takes poor, foolish fishermen and commands them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Open wide your mouth, he says, and preach with confidence, so that it may resound before all creatures. Arm them also with comfort and gladness. The devil," he says, "will be hard on you with his scales, and will kill you; but do not be afraid of those who kill the body and do not like to kill the soul. But rather fear him who may destroy both body and soul into hell," Matth. 10, 28. This is how he fetches the power and the kingdom. He could not be more foolish before the world. For all reason must say that it is a foolish thing that he fights against the devil and all the gates of hell with such a small, weak witness.

38 This is what David says here: "Out of the mouth of young children and infants you have established a power. You have established a kingdom, he says, which is full of power and authority against sin, death and the devil. You have established such a kingdom, not from the wisdom, cleverness, cunning, painting or power of the world, but from the mouths of simple, foolish, powerless people, who "are set apart for the very least, as given over to death," 1 Cor. 4:9. But is this not a miraculous thing, that the mouths of such people should prepare such great and excellent power? Peter appears in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, is not afraid of Annas, Caiphas or the whole council, opens his mouth, strikes the devil's kingdom and with one sermon he converts three thousand souls from the devil's kingdom to Christ. The other apostles likewise approached such power by their mouth and word that the synagogue and the Jewish kingdom fell to the ground over it. Then they come to Rome, seize the supreme power on earth, and bring down the synagogue and the Jewish kingdom.

They spread their pagan, idolatrous nature, and by their mouths they establish such power that no one can resist. Further, they scatter into the world, storm the devil's kingdom through their word, plant and build Christ's church: there comes the power which neither emperors nor kings, neither princes nor mighty men can resist. They may resist it and treat the apostles and Christians with cruelty, but it does not help. The power from the mouths of young children and infants cuts through and retains the victory. Emperors, kings and mighty men of the earth must hang their heads and confess that they are not able to resist.

39. it is unequal stuff that here the mightiest lords on earth, together with the fiercest devils in hell, go against each other and meet together, and the poor, weak disciples, who are considered as slaughter sheep in the world [Rom. 8, 36...] Therefore it is a miracle above miracles that the ruler creates a power in such a way. If he would take the strong princes of heaven, they would be able to do this. Michael would be able to strike down emperors, kings and mighty men on earth. But he doesn't want to use the angelic nature to achieve this power, but needs the human nature for it, which the devil has eaten, and over which he is master, which he also holds captive because of sin. He hangs the same nature on the devil, so that it catches, binds and overcomes the enemy, and accomplishes this through the mouth, through the word and preaching of the gospel. "Go and preach the gospel to every creature", he says to his disciples [Marc. 16, 15.] With this he announces the power and the kingdom.

40 Thus our Lord God saves the greatest and highest power of the angels in heaven, and takes the most foolish, simple, unlearned and weakest on earth, and sets them against the highest wisdom and power of the devil and the world. These are the works of God. For he is a God "who gives life to the dead and calls that which is not to be," Rom. 4:17. Such is his nature and attribute. He proves it with the grain in the field. "Where the same does not fall into the earth," says Christ himself,

John 12:24, "And if it die, it abideth alone. But if it dies", rots, loses its husk and flour in the earth, it gets its root, stem, ears, and "brings forth much fruit". In sum, God's nature is to show His divine majesty and power through nothingness and weakness. He himself says to Paul 2 Cor. 12, 9: "My power is mighty in the weak."

Emperors, kings, princes and rulers of the earth are driving with violence, using all their money and goods against Christ and his kingdom. The devil also storms against it with reason, wisdom and prudence through the heretics, sects and cults. Thus says God: I am able to create strong, powerful emperors, kings and mighty men out of stones, to make reasonable, wise and prudent people, and through them to establish my dominion and kingdom, so that power goes against power, violence against violence, reason against reason, wisdom and prudence against wisdom and prudence; But I will not do this, but will foolishly begin it, that in their great wisdom they may become fools and fools, that they may see and know how all their wealth, power, reason, wisdom, and prudence are nothing before me. Therefore, just as they go about with violence, reason, wisdom and prudence, defying and insisting, so I turn it around straight away and push poor, weak, silly people in front of the noses of the rich, powerful, wise and prudent, who do not have hall and court, but are strangers and pilgrims in the world. And I delight in this, because they insist on power and wisdom, that I meet them with vain weakness and foolishness.

(42) The prophet marvels that the Lord our ruler establishes a power, that is, a mighty, firm, steadfast and everlasting kingdom, and establishes it in such a way that seems foolish to all reason. What then is the way? By what does he establish the power? By word, from the mouths of young children and infants. How does this rhyme with such infinite, eternal power, which is to stand against death, the devil and the world? Let it rhyme, as it may, so the Lord, our ruler, does not need sword, guns or armor to establish this power, but this

Word, and such a word as comes out of the mouths of young children and infants, that is, of wicked, simple-minded people, who are like children who cannot speak. The Romans were such wise men that they thought they had no equal in the world. In contrast, the apostles were unwise and fools before the world. But God gave them a mouth and wisdom that all their opponents could not contradict or resist.

43 Jesus is twelve years old, sitting in the temple at Jerusalem in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, so that all who listen to him are amazed at his understanding and his answer [Luc. 2, 46, 47]. The apostles are also children, unwise men and fools in the sight of the world, not understanding the wisdom of the world, wretched and poor; but having divine wisdom, that they may far surpass the wisdom of all the world, having great heavenly riches, before which they despise all that is in the world, and that they may make all the world rich. Now one thing goes against another. The world boasts and brags about great power, reason and wisdom; so he says, "Be as proud as you like; all your power, splendor, reason and wisdom are filth before me; I will disgrace you with your power, reason and wisdom; I will hang young children and infants on you, and they will build up a power and kingdom with their mouth and word, in defiance and mockery of all your power and wisdom. With the same word I will catch you in your prudence, and make your wisdom foolishness.

What is happening in our time? The pope is not lacking in learned, intelligent, understanding people, but far surpasses us in art, wit and understanding. Yet he does nothing against us. We do nothing more than open our mouths and confidently speak the word. This is the battle we fight with the pope. We do not draw a sword, we do not shoot a gun, but with the Word, the Lord's Prayer, the Child's Faith, the Gospel, we judge a power that is so strong and powerful that it puts down popery, monasticism, nunnery and the entire papacy. He thinks our gospel is foolish preaching, yes, heresy, but he must be frightened by it and go down. Think of the Lord, our ruler,

is much stronger than the devil, the pope and the world. He can do the art, when he is weak, he is strongest. With weakness and lack of strength, he sows it, lets his word preach, which the world considers child's work, foolishness and foolishness. But through such weakness and lack of strength he is so powerful that he puts to shame all other words, power and wisdom in the world.

This is the way that the Lord our ruler establishes his kingdom through the outward, oral word that the apostles preached and that we also now, by God's grace, preach, hear, accept and believe. Many hear it and accept it with us. We do not force anyone to come; they force themselves so that no one can resist them, as Christ says in Matth. 11, 12: "The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and those who do violence snatch it to themselves. The pope and his followers are angry, mad and furious, rage and rage, but they do nothing with their anger and wrath. The Lord, our ruler, establishes a power, founds a strong, mighty kingdom, which puts the devil, the pope and the world to shame. And this he does through the mouth of young children and infants, that is, of the foolish and simple, who hold to the pure word. For whoever wants to be in this kingdom and be saved must turn and become like a child. As a child goes to school and learns the Lord's Prayer and faith, so we must also go to church and hear and learn the gospel.

46 It is a strange and wonderful thing, and an unequal armor, as it was said [§ 35 ff], that the mouths of young children and infants should have such power against emperors, kings, and mighty men of the earth, and against the devil, with his infernal angels in the air. For all reason concludes: If one has strong enemies before him and wants to defeat them, then one must use such force for this that is stronger, as Christ also testifies in the Gospel [Luc. 11, 21. 22.] Now here are strong, powerful enemies, the mighty ones on earth and the infernal enemy, against whom one will break little with the mouth. Thus human reason concludes, and cannot judge nor conclude otherwise. But the underage and infant

The mouth of the angel shall do it, however strong and wicked the enemies may be.

(47) For this very reason, that the enemies are pressing out of their power and authority, God will put them to shame through the mouths of babes and sucklings, as butter melts in the fire. Or, if they are not put to shame, they shall become children in their great prudence. Therefore St. Paul says 1 Cor. 3:18: "Whosoever among you shall think himself wise, let him be a fool in this world, that he may be wise." For whoever wants to be in this kingdom, as 45] said, must become a child. Now those who keep God's word and desire His wisdom, let themselves be taught and learn as students in the school. Just as the Lord our ruler himself becomes weak when he is born into the world, so he also sees his kingdom from the earth in weakness. But on the last day he will appear as a strong, great God. Now he establishes his kingdom through the mouth of babes and sucklings; "but then he will be revealed from heaven with the angels of his power and with flames of fire", 2 Thess. 1, 7. 8. Now he speaks to his enemies through the mouths of babes and sucklings, whom the world considers fools; then he will speak differently to them when he "will give vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey his gospel", 2 Thess. 1, 8.

48 He remembers not only the enemy, but also the avenger of vengeance. By this he means primarily the synagogue and the Jewish people; then also the devil with his scales: as was the Roman Empire, and still is today the end-Christ and the pope, item, Mahomet and the Turks. For all the histories bear witness that greater enmity and greediness has not been practiced against any man on earth than has been practiced, and is still practiced daily, against the Lord our ruler and against his dominion and kingdom. Read the history of the passion of Christ, and you will find out who is the avenger of whom David speaks here. When Christ hangs on the cross, cries out and says: "I thirst" [Joh. 19, 28.], his crucifiers do not give him a drink of water, but to great envy and hatred, anger and revengefulness.

they give him gall and vinegar, Ps. 69, 22, or, as St. Marcus writes [Cap. 15, 23], myrrh in wine to drink in his great thirst. They do not do this to the other executioners who are crucified with him on both ropes. It is the custom of all the world to have compassion on evildoers when they are executed and put to death. When their soul is troubled, and their tongue is dry, they are given the best drink of perfume; as the wise man commanded, Proverbs 31:6. In sum, no robber, murderer, or scoundrel, however great he may be, is exalted in the world, against whom all mercy is forgotten; but against Christ on the cross all mercy is forgotten. This is the devil, who embittered, incited and drove the world against Christ.

This day it is the same for us. The pope and his patrons are not as hostile to murderers and robbers as they are to us. They can have pity on all villains and murderers, have mercy on them and spare them; but they are hostile and hateful to us, so that they are not so hostile and hateful to any Turk, heretic, Anabaptist or fanatic as they are to us. If they could soak us with vinegar and gall, they would gladly do so. And as it is with us, so it is, and so it should be with all righteous Christians and believers on earth. This is not human malice, envy or hatred, but comes from the devil, who makes the world so bitter and hateful toward us. This also does not happen without a cause. For because Christ puts to shame the power and wisdom of the enemy through our mouth, he clenches his teeth at us and would gladly tear us apart.

(50) Now these are two peculiar virtues of the devil. The first is that he is an enemy of Christ and his church; the second is that he is full of vengeance, and has no other cause than that he cannot stand Christ and his gospel. Where the young children and singers open their mouths, preach confidently, and do not depart from the truth, he not only becomes an enemy, but also thinks day and night how he may avenge himself, and execute the young children and infants who preach and confess Christ. Our adversaries have now kept counsel over us for many years, as they have made their effort on us.

They, who want to cool us down, do not cease to oppress us and to dampen us. In sum, they have no peace nor rest until they see before their eyes that we are all perishing.

51 But our consolation is that it says here: The mouth of babes and sucklings shall remain, and Christ's kingdom shall endure; but the enemy and the avenger of vengeance must be destroyed. This is what happened to the synagogue and the Jewish kingdom. Christ's kingdom was established through the mouths of the poor fishermen and disciples of Christ, and still exists; but the Jews have fallen to the ground because of it. The same thing happened to the Romans. They had neither peace nor rest, and thought to exterminate Christ and his Christians; but Christ remained before them with his kingdom and church, but they are gone, with all their power, wisdom and authority. It will be the same for the pope. If he is hostile to us for a long time, bitter and vengeful, Christ and our gospel will nevertheless remain before him, but he will perish. He defends himself confidently, deceives many people; many devout Christians must also suffer and be killed because of it. Nevertheless, the Lord our ruler remains seated in heaven, ruling for and on behalf of his church, sending babes and sucklings who open their mouths and bring about power through the word.

52 So David confesses here that we are here on earth in such a kingdom, where we have evil, poisonous enemies against us, who are full of vengeance, and yet comforts us that it will not be necessary; the mouth of the young children and infants will remain, because the Lord our ruler wants to establish power through them; but the enemy and the vengeful must be destroyed. This he has seen before, that the young children and infants have to deal with evil, vengeful enemies, whom the devil has possessed with arrogance and stubbornness, so that they will not yield to Christ and his gospel nor be obedient. Their thoughts are always directed to filling the mouths of young children and infants, but before they are halfway there, they will lie down and perish.

(53) It is in weakness, but power shall come out of such weakness. Paul also complains about weakness, even complains that he was given a stake in the flesh, namely,

The angel of Satan beat him with his fists, so that he would not rise up; but he confessed three times to the Lord that he would depart from him. But the Lord said to him, "Be content with my grace, for my power is mighty in the weak," 2 Cor. 12:7-9. So even though we are weak and must be scratched and afflicted by the enemy and the avenger, Christ comforts us, saying, "Be content that I am your great Lord. Be content, for my way holds thus, that I begin it in weakness. I found and establish my kingdom through your mouth. For this you must endure and suffer; but for this I will not cast you into hell, but will be with you and strengthen you. If this is true, as it certainly is, let the devil be angry with you with his infernal gates, and let him who cannot help it. Let us only cling with steadfast faith to the Lord our sovereign, who will strengthen and sustain us.

V. 4 For I will see the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you prepare.

The other verse [v. 3], 1) as we have heard [§ 28 ff], speaks of the kingdom of word and faith, that the Lord our Ruler has prepared a power out of the mouth of young children and infants to destroy the enemy and the avenger. The third verse [v. 4] speaks of the kingdom of glory and revelation that we have to wait for in that life. It is one kingdom, the kingdom of faith, and the kingdom of the glory to come. But it is thus done and distinguished: that which is offered to us here, in the kingdom of faith, in word, and which we receive and grasp by faith, the same will be presented to us there in revelation. Thus says St. Peter, 1 Petr. 1, 12, "that such a gospel should be proclaimed to us, which even the angels desire to behold. Therefore it is one kingdom, without any difference in knowledge. Now we hear it in the Word; there we shall know it.

1) Luther did not count the title of this Psalm here as one verse, as is done in our Bible; hence the different counting from ours.

have in sight. Now we believe and hope with all Christians on earth; there we will possess it with all holy angels and God's elect in heaven.

(55) David speaks of the heavens, the moon and the stars, which are the works of the finger of the Lord our sovereign. This same finger is the Holy Spirit. For this is how Christ Himself interprets Luc. 11, 20: "If I cast out devils by the finger of God," that is, as it says in Matthew [Cap. 12, 28], "by the Spirit of God. But that he says here, "Thy finger," pluraliter, as of many, is because he speaks of the Holy Spirit, not as He is for Himself, in His majesty, but as He shows Himself to Christendom with His gifts, with which He adorns and decorates the faithful. These same gifts are not one, but many and various, even though the Holy Spirit is one and indivisible for His own person, 1 Cor. 12:4. From this it follows that David is speaking in this place, not of the heavens, moon and stars as they were initially created, of which Moses writes, Gen. 1:14 ff, but of the new heavens, new moon, new stars, as they will be prepared anew by the Spirit of the Lord our Ruler in the resurrection of the dead, when the kingdom of word and faith will cease, and the kingdom of revelation and vision will begin. Then we shall see the heavens, the moon, and the mortal things rightly; not as we see them now in this world, but in that world, when we ourselves shall be no longer earthly nor mortal, but heavenly and immortal. Isaiah Cap. 30, 26. says: "The moon's light will be like the sun's light, and the sun's light will be seven times brighter than now, at the time when the Lord will bind up the hurt of his people and heal their wounds. This is what the prophet says about the redemption from the Assyrian prison; but nevertheless, in a figure, as many teachers have understood it, he indicates the redemption that happened and will happen through Christ. For Christ binds up the damage and heals the wounds of his people twice. Once through the forgiveness of sins, which he acquired with his death and blood, and brings to us through his gospel, holy sacraments, faith, and the healing of the sins of his people.

and spirit. Secondly, through the resurrection from the dead, when he will raise us from the dead completely pure, without all sin. Then the damage will be completely healed, and the wounds will be completely healed, and we will be completely healthy, whole and pure in body and soul. Then heaven and earth will be new; the moon's light will be like the sun's light, and the sun's light will be seven times brighter than it is now.

Now the sun is a beautiful, bright light, so that no man, however sharp and bright his eyes, can see the sun's brilliance without wavering. What will happen in that life, when the sun's light will be seven times brighter than it is now? There will also belong bright, clear eyes, which may suffer and endure such sun. If Adam had remained in the innocence in which he was created, he would have had bright, clear eyes, and could see into the sun like an eagle. But because of sin and the fall, we human beings are so weakened, poisoned and corrupted in body, soul, eyes, ears, and everywhere that our face is not the hundredth part as sharp as Adam's face was before the fall. Our body is unclean, corrupt and leprous; and all creatures are subject to vanity, Rom. 8, 20. Sun, moon, stars, clouds, air, earth, water, are no longer as pure, beautiful and lovely as they were. But in that day it will all become new and beautiful again, as St. Paul speaks Rom. 8, 21: "The creature will be set free from the service of the perishable being, to the glorious freedom of the children of God."

(58) David therefore rejoices in spirit, and looks forward with joyful heart to the future glory of the children of God, and the renewal of the creatures, when the heavens, the moon, and the stars shall be made new by the finger of the Lord our sovereign, that is, the Holy Spirit. As if he wanted to say: I hope for it, and I am sure, I will one day come out of this pitiful valley into another world; out of this darkness into clarity; out of the darkness into the light, where the Lord, our ruler, will reveal and show himself together with the works of his fingers, that is [the] Holy Spirit; then I will have a new heaven, a new moon,

and see new stars, and also be clothed with a new, beautiful body, adorned with new, sharp eyes.

(59) Hereby he teaches that the life of the elect and blessed will be in heaven in that world, and in addition a heavenly being and life, where one will no longer have to work, toil and worry, eat, drink, mourn, and suffer, as one must do in this world, but will keep an eternal Sabbath and holiday, be eternally satisfied in God, be eternally happy, secure, and free from all suffering, as one must do in this world, but keep an eternal Sabbath and holiday, be eternally satisfied in God, eternally happy, secure and free from all suffering, look upon God and His works eternally, not hidden behind the cover, as in this life the cover is drawn forward, but with the face uncovered in Revelation. It will not be an earthly, temporal life, but a heavenly, eternal life. Not that we will be in heaven alone, but will be where we want to be, in heaven, on earth, above and below, and where we want to be. Then we will no longer drag ourselves with this heavy body, which must be lifted and carried, and which always sinks to the earth, but our body will be nimble and light. And in sum, "we will be like the angels of God in heaven", as Christ says Matth. 22, 30.

(60) David believed in such future glory of the children of God and renewal of the creatures, rejoiced in it from the bottom of his heart, stood in certain hope that he would see the heavens, moon and stars prepared and renewed by the finger of God. God has postponed this glory, therefore all the saints must wait for it, as it is written in Heb. 11, 39, 40: "All the saints have received the testimony through faith, and have not received the promise. Therefore God has provided something better for us beforehand, so that they would not be perfected without us." God did not bring His saints to glory soon, but let them seek the Fatherland. We must all come together beforehand, the first and the last, who sleep in the earth, and who will remain over in the future of the LORD. Now when we all come together, then the glory will be revealed in us. St. Paul says in 1 Thess. 4, 16. 17: "Those who are dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive and remain will become the first and the last.

will be drawn up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so will always be with the Lord.

(61) In such a future being David sees, and he cannot help but feel as if the world had already come to an end, and as if he had already risen from the dead, and saw heaven, moon, and stars standing before him anew. Indeed, he also saw it, but in faith and spirit. In his time he will see it with us, and we with him, in the Revelation. The prophets and apostles have proclaimed it to us. Isaiah saith Cap. 65:17, 18: "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth; and they shall remember the former things no more, neither shall they lay them to heart: but they shall rejoice for ever, and be glad in that which I create." And St. Peter says, 2 Pet. 3, 13: "We wait for a new heaven and a new earth, according to his promise, in which righteousness dwells." Such proclamation of the prophets and apostles was done by the Holy Spirit, and cannot be lacking.

(62) This will be a wide and beautiful heaven and a pleasant earth, much more beautiful and pleasant than Paradise was. In paradise there were not burning nettles, nor prickly thorns and thistles, nor noxious herbs, nor worms, nor beasts, but beautiful, noble roses and fragrant herbs; all the trees in the garden were pleasant to look at and good to eat. After Adam's fall, the earth was cursed to bear thorns and thistles, and man must feed on it with sorrow all his life. That is why so many harmful creatures have come to fight against us and torment and plague us, even we humans among ourselves. Now all this will be set right by the fingers of the Lord, our sovereign, and everything will be prepared anew. Then there will be no more sin on earth, nor injustice, nor death, nor murder, nor hatred, nor envy, but only justice, love and friendship. Now unrighteousness and unfaithfulness dwell on earth. By this we shall know what we have lost through Adam's fall and our sin, and learn to long and desire

1) In the original: "the".

after the regeneration and renewal of the creature, and after the freedom of the children of God.

But how is it that David in this verse remembers only the heavens, the moon and the stars, and does not also remember the sun, since Isaiah Cap. 65 remembers the sun, and the sun must be there where the heavens, moon and stars are, and people who are to see the heavens, moon and stars? Without the sun, people are poor, miserable people, and no one can live without the sun, neither in this world nor in the world to come. Why then does he leave the sun outside here? Answer: He does this for the sake of meaning. The sun signifies Christ in the holy scriptures, as will be said soon after. But because David speaks in this verse of the heavens, the moon and the stars, which are the works of the fingers of the Lord our sovereign, and Christ cannot be counted among such works, he did not want to remember the sun in this narrative, for the sake of the meaning. Afterwards he remembers the sun beautifully and gloriously, as follows:

V. 5: What is man, that thou art mindful of him; and the child of man, that thou art mindful of him?

Here he paints a strange sun, and calls the sun a man and a man-child. The holy scriptures compare Christ to the sun, especially the prophet Malachi, Cap. 4, 2. where he says: "To you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise, and salvation under its wings. Just as the natural sun gives off a glow and light to make day, and awakens men from sleep to go about their work, as Moses teaches Gen. 1:16: "God made the great light to rule the day." And Ps. 104, 22. f.: "When the sun goes out, man goes out to his work and to his farm until evening." Thus Christ, who is the spiritual sun, gives the light and splendor of his gospel into the world and enlightens the hearts of men with it. He himself says John 8:12: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have light.

have the light of life." Malachi calls Christ the sun of righteousness, under whose wings is salvation. For whatever heart Christ enlightens with his splendor, the same man is righteous before God because of the sun; and as long as he remains under the wings of this sun, he is blessed. Ps. 118, 24. David says: "This is the day that the LORD makes." Jesus Christ is the Lord. Just as the natural sun makes the day, so the spiritual sun, Jesus Christ, makes this day, in which we rejoice and are glad.

Here he does not call Christ the sun, but speaks of his ministry, why he is and is called the sun. He is such a sun, he says, that he is a man and a human child, thus giving Christ two new names. In the Hebrew text these names are differentiated. Such a difference cannot be given in Latin or German. The first name, Enosh, means a sorrowful, poor, miserable man, Ps. 9, 21.: "Give them, O Lord, a Master, that they may know that they are men", that is, poor, miserable, wretched men "are". Ps. 103:15: "A man in his life is like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field." The other name is a common name of the whole human race, and means a bad, mean person. Ps. 49:2, 3: "Give ear, all peoples; take heed, all who live in this age, both common man and lords." 2c. So he calls Christ Enosh, a man, because of his misery and sorrow, which he had on earth. *Filius Adam* man child, he calls him because of his nature, that he was born of man, not created by God without means, as Adam was created from a lump of earth, and as Eve was made from Adam's rib; but more commonly, and yet supernaturally, born of a virgin, by the Holy Spirit, as the Christian faith teaches. Christ takes this name from this Psalm, and in the Gospel calls Himself the Son of Man, because He was born of a human mother, and took on all the characteristics of a true, natural man, yet without sin. Thus St. Paul says Phil. 2, 7: "[He] took the form of a servant, was made like another man, and in manner like a man.

invented." Hebr. 2, 14: "Since the children have flesh and blood, he has been made partaker of them in the same way. Item, V. 16. 17.: "Nowhere does he take the angels to himself, but the seed of Abrahah he takes to himself. Therefore he had to become like his brothers in all things" 2c.

66. but he pictures Christ especially before all men on earth, saying, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the child of man, that thou art mindful of him?" This speaks of the high, deep degree of Christ's humiliation. For he looks at Christ in his greatest torture and highest suffering, that he is mocked, scourged, crowned and crucified, as St. Paul also speaks of such humiliation Phil. 2, 8.: "Humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." In such humiliation no one took him for a man, but everyone who passed by shook his head and said: "Fie, how God has cursed this man to hang on the cross! Isaiah speaks of it Cap. 52, 14: "Many will be angry with you, because your form is more ugly than other people's, and your appearance more than the children of men. Item, Cap. 53, 2. 3.: "He had no form nor beauty. We saw him, but there was no form to please us. He was the most despised and unworthy, full of pain and sickness. He was so despised that people hid their faces from him. Therefore we esteemed him nothing." And Ps. 22:7: "I am a worm, and no man, a mockery of men, and despised of the people."

67 This humiliation of Christ was especially offensive to the Jewish people. For their belief was: whoever is well on earth, whoever is rich, whoever is honored, and whoever has good days, he would be blessed. As the 144th Psalm, vv. 11-15, says of such faith: "Deliver me, and save me from the hand of strange children, whose doctrine is of no avail, and their works are false. That our sons may grow up in their youth like plants, and our daughters like hollow oriels, like palaces. And that our chambers be full, which can give forth one store after another. That our sheep may bear a thousand, and a hundred thousand in our villages. That our oxen may work much,

so that there is no harm, no loss, nor complaint in our streets. Blessed are the people who prosper in this way. This was the faith of the Jews. When they saw Christ hanging miserably on the cross, they despised him and cursed him.

(68) David marvels at this and says: "Is it possible, or should one believe it, that God should remember such a miserable, wretched human being and take care of such a human child who dies so miserably on the cross? Should he be the dearest child, and the chosen one of God, whom everyone scorns, reviles and blasphemes? How foolish does it make God? Should the Son of God, the Lord, be our ruler, whose name is glorious in all lands, and who is thanked in heaven, and hangs on the cross, and is considered a mockery and a curse of the people? David speaks this out of great astonishment. As if he wanted to say: All bets think that God has forgotten this man and does not take care of this human child. But "the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is done by the Lord, and is a wonder in the sight of men" [Ps. 118, 22. 23].

V. 6. You will let him be forsaken by God for a little while, but with honors and adornment you will crown him.

In this verse David describes how miserably Christ will be abandoned. No man can express this piece in words as it is round, short and simple. He does not speak of Christ's bodily suffering, which is also great and heavy, but of his high spiritual suffering, which he felt in his soul, which suffering far surpasses all bodily suffering. He describes this same high suffering in the highest degree, and says: "You will let him be forsaken by God for a little while." What this is, no man on earth understands, no man can reach with words, nor can he express it. For to be forsaken by God is much worse than death. Those who have tried and experienced a little of it, they may think a little. But safe, raw, untried and inexperienced people do not know and understand anything about it. When God gives us the bag full

Money, the ground full of grain, the cellar full of wine, lets us be without cross and temptation, and float in joy, there we have made good, and let us think that heaven hangs full of violins, and we sit in God's lap; but if God hides or conceals himself, and lets the devil be tamed with us, there is misery and distress, yes, it is death itself.

From the example of Job, one can understand to some extent what it means to be forsaken by God. Job is bad and righteous, God-fearing, and shuns evil, and there is no one like him in the land; as God himself testifies to him [Job 1:8, 2:3]. But Satan comes among the children of God who come before the Lord and says to the Lord [Cap. 1, 9-12]: "Do you think that Job fears God for nothing? Thou hast kept him, his house, and all that he hath, round about. Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his goods have spread abroad. But stretch out thine hand, and touch all that he hath; what is the matter, that he will blaspheme thee to thy face? The Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thine hand; but lay not thine hand upon him alone." There the devil himself confesses that he cannot come to Job, nor touch his goods, but God permits it. For God has placed a guard of His holy angels around Job, who protect and preserve him and his goods, as it is written in Ps. 34:8: "The angel of the Lord is encamped around those who fear Him, and helps them out."

Satan appears once again among the children of God before the Lord and says, Job, Cap. 2, 4-6: "Skin for skin, and all that a man has he leaves for his life. But put forth thine hand, and touch his bones and his flesh; what matter, he will blaspheme thee to thy face? The Lord said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand. But spare his life." There the abandonment is general. First, God is near, so the devil cannot come to Job. Then God steps away, leaving room for the devil to touch his goods and body. And Satan does not spare Job either, takes away his goods, strikes his children dead, attacks his body as well, strikes him with evil blisters from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

But Job is not yet completely abandoned; his soul and life is still preserved and safe under the protection of God and His holy angels, also still has comfort in his heart.

But when his wife mocks him and says [Job 2:9], "Do you still hold fast to your piety? Yes, bless GOD and die," Job still stands firm, answers, and says to her, v. 10: "You speak as foolish women speak. Have we received good from GOD, and should we not also accept evil?" But it does not last long. His friends come to lament and comfort him, and the pain in his body becomes very great, and GOD hides Himself. There he is completely abandoned, has no help nor comfort, neither from God, nor angels, nor men, falls into trembling and doubt, feels God's wrath and hell, curses the day in which he was born and the night when it was said that a man was conceived [Cap. 3, 1. ff.]; that is right, to be abandoned by God.

73 St. Paul's example is just of the blow, without Job's example seems to be closer. Satan's angel beats Paul with fists [2 Cor. 12:7, 8], he is greatly afflicted and terrified by the devil, he begs the Lord three times to depart from him; but the Lord says, v. 9: "Be content with my grace." This is a high, heavy challenge. Yet Paul is not so utterly forsaken as Job, who cursed the day in which he was born. Therefore, I have said [§69] that no one understands what it is to be forsaken by God without the great, strong saints, such as Job and Paul, who have tried and experienced something of this.

74 Enough of that. Let us return to Christ. David undoubtedly looks at Christ in the spirit, as he wrestles with death in the garden and cries out at the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" [Matth. 27, 46.] For the same is the right, high, spiritual suffering, which no man can consider or understand. In the garden He Himself says: "My soul is sorrowful unto death" [Matth. 26, 38]. So he wants to say: I am in such mourning and anguish that I want to die of mourning and anguish. Tears himself from his disciples at

a stone throw, kneels down and prays; in the prayer it comes that he wrestles with death, and prays more fiercely. His sweat becomes like drops of blood falling to the earth [Luc. 22, 41. ff]. This high spiritual suffering is what David is talking about here, since Christ struggled with death, and felt in his heart no differently than if he had been forsaken by God. And indeed, he was also abandoned by God in truth; not that the Godhead has separated from humanity (for Godhead and humanity are united in this person, which is Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Mary, so that they cannot be separated or divided in eternity), but that the Godhead has withdrawn and hidden itself, so that it seems, and whoever reads it would like to say: Here is no God, but only man, in addition a sorrowful and despondent man. Mankind has been left alone, and the devil has had free access to Christ, and the Godhead has withdrawn its power, leaving mankind to fight alone.

75 St. Paul also speaks about this Phil. 2, 6. 7.: "Jesus Christ, when he was in divine form, did not consider it a robbery to be like God, but expressed himself and took the form of a servant. He says that Christ expressed himself in the divine form, that is, he did not use his divine power, nor did he use his omnipotent power, but he drew it in when he suffered. In such an expression and humiliation the devil tried all his infernal power. Man and the child of man stands there, bearing the sin of the world; and because he does not take in divine comfort and strength, the devil has clenched his teeth at the innocent little lamb and wants to devour it. So the righteous and innocent man must tremble and tremble as a poor, condemned sinner, and in his tender, innocent heart feel God's wrath and judgment against sin, taste for us eternal death and damnation, and in sum, suffer all that a condemned sinner deserves and must suffer eternally.

This is what David is talking about. As if to say, "Sin and death will be overcome, the enemy will be destroyed, the kingdom of heaven will be won, so that the Lord our ruler will be true.

He has worked with body and soul in his tender humanity, and has come into such distress and anguish that he has not only sweated blood, but has also not felt otherwise than as if he had been forsaken by God. He suffered the great affliction that is called being forsaken by God, and the devil's fiery darts, hellish fire and fear, and everything that we had earned with our sins, had to dampen and extinguish in his soul. By this the kingdom of heaven, eternal life and blessedness is acquired for us; as also Isaiah says Cap. 53, 11: "Because his soul hath wrought, he shall see his pleasure, and have fullness." His body and soul labor, he says, in great and severe suffering; but this he does for our great benefit, and for his own great joy. For he overcomes his enemies and conquers, and through his knowledge he makes many righteous, Isa. 53:11.

But the best thing is that the prophet adds: "You let him be forsaken by God for a little while. The abandonment is not meant to last long, much less eternally, but only a little while, namely only a few hours, and yet not always, nor for and for. On Good Friday in the evening (for according to the Jewish way, the day must start from the evening, as Moses says in Genesis 1:5: "Then the evening and the morning became the first day"), the suffering begins in the morning; after noon, he died on the cross, and everything is accomplished.

The night before, after supper, he went out into the garden, and the abandonment began. In the morning he stands at the cross, crying out loud: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? [Soon after, he gave up his spirit, was taken down from the cross, and laid in the tomb. There he rests and keeps the Sabbath. When the Sabbath was past, on the first day of the Sabbath very early, he rose from the dead. Then all sorrow, distress and anguish is over; as Isaiah says Cap. 53, 8: "He is taken out of anguish and judgment, who will speak the length of his life?"

So the prophet preaches deliciously and powerfully about the suffering of Christ. It is a short and round sermon. But with short words he shows two kinds of suffering in Christ,

He indicates his physical suffering by calling him Enosh, that is, a miserable and suffering man. His highly spiritual suffering is indicated when he says that he will be forsaken by God for a little while, that is, he will be in great anguish, will have no help nor comfort, neither from God, nor angels, nor men; without an angel from heaven appearing to him in the garden and strengthening him. On the cross he is completely abandoned, and in addition he is given vinegar to drink in his great thirst. All creatures stand up as if they were against him. He hangs in the air and floats upward, and has no place on earth where he could set foot. There is no one here to sympathize with him or to comfort him. That is his suffering. Now follows his joyful resurrection from the dead.

But with honors and ornaments you will crown him.

80. For whom no one cares, but he who is forsaken by God and all competition, you will snatch him out of suffering into peace; out of fear into comfort and joy; for the scorn, mockery and shame he has endured, you will adorn him with honor; For the ugly form he has had on earth, you will clothe him deliciously, so that he will be clothed around and around, adorned and crowned, and he will be beautiful not only for his person, in body and soul, full of eternal life, full of joy, bliss, wisdom, power, might, full of heavenly majesty and divinity, so that all creatures will smile at him and worship him, but also gloriously adorned and decorated with his Christians and believers on earth, and chosen angels in heaven, in this world and the world to come.

He calls two kinds of adornment, so that Christ should be crowned. The first adornment, so that Christ should be crowned by his resurrection, is "honor". Cabad actually means to be heavy in goods. Then Cabod also means honor and glory, because riches and abundance bring prestige and honor, while poverty and lack bring dishonor and contempt. The prophet contrasts this adornment with everything he said before about the humiliation and suffering of Christ. As if he wanted to say: The poor, miserable and suffering man, Enosh, and man-child, will be crowned with heavenly riches, with

divine honor, with such majesty, dominion and power as cannot be attributed to any creature. He who has been abandoned by God and all creatures, God will bring him back from death to life; he who was despised, mocked and spat upon in the time of his flesh, he will be exalted to such glory and honor that all the angels of God will worship him.

82 The epistle to the Hebrews speaks of this adornment Cap. 2, 9: "But the one who lacked angels for a little while, we see that it is Jesus, crowned with glory and honor through the suffering of death, that by the grace of God he might taste death for all." And Christ Himself in His prayer Jn. 17:5: "Now glorify me, O Father, with thine own self, with the clarity which I had with thee before the world was." St. Paul also sees 1 Tim. 3, 16: "Great is the mystery of God, revealed in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, appearing to angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed by the world, received up into glory."

The other adornment is "adornment", hadar, which actually means adornment, so it comes from delicious, glorious clothes. But here he speaks of royal adornment, so that Christ, crowned as a king, will be glorious in this world and in the world to come. Kings are used to be adorned when they are to be resplendent. So Christ the King, says David, will also be adorned, not only for himself, in his natural body, but also for us, in his spiritual body, which is his church. For he gathers his church by the preaching of the gospel, and adorns and decorates it with his Holy Spirit. And such adornment is set against his ugly form, of which is said above [§ 66] from Isaiah Cap. 53. As if he wanted to say: The man, Enosh, and man-child has little adornment, little appendage at the time of his suffering. His own people cry out against him: Crucify him, crucify him; yes, his own disciples turn away from him and flee from him. But after his resurrection he will have a glorious ornament and great following of many Christians on earth. This will be the beautiful ornament and the beautiful garment, so that he will be crowned in this world.

Of this adornment of Christ and His Christianity the prophets preach mightily. Isaiah Cap. 60, 11. says of Christ: "Your gates shall always be open, neither shall they be shut day nor night, that the power of the Gentiles may be brought unto you, and their kings be brought unto you." And Jeremiah Cap. 16, 19: "The heathen shall come unto thee from the end of the world." But especially David preaches gloriously and sweetly of this adornment of Christ and His church Ps. 45. And Isaiah Cap. 61, 10. speaks in the person of all Christendom, "I rejoice in the LORD, and my soul is glad in my God. For he hath clothed me with garments of salvation, and clothed me with the robe of righteousness; as a bridegroom adorned with priestly ornaments, and as a bride adorned in her jewels."

But in that day he will be clothed with the right clothing and adornment when he comes in glory with his elect and holy angels; as St. Paul says in 2 Thess. 1:10, "Christ will come to appear glorious with his saints and wonderful with all believers. And Christ Himself says Matth. 25, 31: "The Son of Man will come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him. Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations." Item, when he will have around him all the work of his fingers, new heavens, moon, stars and all creatures. David wants all this to be understood by the glory and adornment, so that Christ shall be crowned. Therefore these words are a glorious prophecy of the resurrection of Christ and of his crowning. And there will be no end to such honor and adornment.

V. 7 Thou wilt make him lord over the work of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet.

In this verse David describes Christ as a true man, and yet at the same time a true God and Lord over all creatures. For the word Tamshilehu: You will make him Lord, actually means to make him Lord, as a man is made Lord. This is where Moschel comes from,

This does not mean Lord, as God is called Lord, but as a man is Lord and rules. Judg. 8:22, 23. Some of Israel said to Gideon, "Be lord over us, you and your son, and your son's son, because you have delivered us from the hand of the Midianites." But Gideon answered, "I will not be lord over you, neither shall my son be lord over you, but the LORD shall be lord over you." Therefore Moschel is called such lord, as a householder in the house is lord, to whom everyone in the house must be obedient, wife, child and servants 2c., as God speaks to Eve, Gen. 3, 16: "Your will shall be subject to your husband, and he shall be your lord (Moschel)"; or, as a prince in the land is lord, to whom all inhabitants of the land must be subject, as Joseph says Gen. 45, 9.: "God has set me lord in all Egypt." So Christ also shall be made Lord, that angels and men shall be obedient to Him. Ps. 22, 29.: "The LORD has a kingdom, and he rules (is Moshe, Lord) among the Gentiles." Ps. 59, 14: "That they may know that God is ruler (Moshe) in Jacob, in all the earth.

87 And he saith thus, Thou wilt make him ruler over the work of thy hands. Item: "You have put everything under his feet. Thus he testifies that Christ is true man, and at the same time true God. For God makes no one Lord over the work of his hands, nor puts everything under his feet, unless he is like him, that is, God. God alone is Lord over the work of his hands, and has everything under his feet. Since this man, Christ, who has been abandoned by God for a little while, is to be made Lord over God's work, over heaven, angels, sun, moon, earth, men, air, water, and over all that is in heaven, on earth, and in water, it follows that he is truly God.

88) But how he will be made Lord over God's work and creature, he does not say this explicitly, but he gives it sufficiently to understand. For he says, "You will make him lord." Which "him"? Whom you have left for a little while, and whom you will crown with honor and adornment. Therefore he speaks of the exaltation and transfiguration of Christ according to his-

n the resurrection from the dead. St. Peter speaks of the exaltation Apost. 2, 33: "Now that he has been exalted by the right hand of God, he has received the promise of the Holy Spirit." Apost. 5, 31: "God has exalted him by his right hand to be a prince and a savior." 2c. And St. Paul Phil. 2, 9: "Therefore God has exalted him." St. John, Cap. 7, 39. speaks of the transfiguration: "The Holy Spirit was not yet there, because Jesus was not yet transfigured." St. Paul calls it "proving," Rom. 1, 4. "He is glorified or proved a Son of GOD." From eternity Christ is HErr over all creatures, before he became man; but having become man, and forsaken of God a little while, and yet crowned with honors and ornaments, he is temporally made Lord, after mankind, by the revelation and glorification after his resurrection and ascension. From eternity he was born Lord, but therefore he is not Lord for us. But temporally he was made Lord, and by the resurrection from the dead he was transfigured to be Lord also over us, over all that is in heaven and on earth.

So Christ is truly man and truly God. He is man through the temporal birth, born of the Virgin Mary. He is God through the eternal birth, born of the Father in eternity. After humanity he suffered, was abandoned by God, died, rose again from the dead, and through the transfiguration was made Lord over all. According to the Godhead he is Lord from eternity. According to mankind he is made Lord temporally, and not from eternity. That is why all the angels of God worship this man, for he is one, undivided person with the Godhead, and also true God, not two persons. He is a true, natural man, for he is called Enosh, that is, a suffering man and a man-child. True GOD he is, for he is made Lord over all that GOD's hands have made. This belongs to God alone, as Isaiah says; therefore he is God and Lord over angels, men and devils. Emperors and kings on earth are like kings of cards against this King. But Christ is the right King and Lord over all that God has created. Because he is now painted in the same way,

Power and glory shall be set with the Father, so it must follow that He is true, almighty God.

90 Thus David speaks in the spirit Ps. 110, 1: "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. This is the testimony of Christ against the Pharisees, proving that He is not only a man and the Son of David, but also the God of David and the Lord. And Matth. 28, 18. He himself says: "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. To which "Me"? To me, Mary's Son, and born of man. How was it given to me? According to the Godhead I received it from the Father before I became man; according to the humanity in which I suffered and rose from the dead, I received it at the time when it was revealed and transfigured that I am Lord and have authority over all things.

From this let us learn once again that Christ is one, undivided person, and yet has two natures, divine and human, with body and soul. According to the divine nature he is true God, born of the Father in eternity, having equal power and honor with the Father and the Holy Spirit. According to the human nature he is true man and man-child, born of a human mother, and is set as Lord over all creatures and works of God. Even though he is already man and man-child, he is still Lord over everything. He is not subject to the angels, but the angels are subject to him. The epistle to Hebrews, Cap. 2, 5-7" says: "He has not made the angels subject to the world to come, of which we speak. But one testifies in one place, saying, What is man, that thou rememberest him? and the Son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him lack a little time of angels; thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, and hast set him over the works of thy hands."

But lest the text should be crooked, he speaks universally: "All things," he says, "thou hast put under his feet. This piece is powerfully drawn from Hebr. 2, 8: "In that he has put all things under his feet, he has left nothing that is not under his feet." Adam, in paradise, is also made Lord over God's creatures and works. But it becomes

not put everything under his feet. Indeed, after the first creation, no man is set over another as lord, let alone that he should be set over angels as lord. The text Genesis 1:28 reads: "Rule over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. This is still a small dominion compared to the dominion of Christ, namely a dominion of human reason over fish, birds and animals. But here the text is much different: "You have put everything under his feet." There nothing is excluded, except the Father, who has all things subject to the Son, 1 Cor. 15, 27. and this dominion goes over angels, men and everything that is in heaven and earth. St. Paul speaks gloriously about this, Eph. 1, 20-22: "He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heaven, above all principality, power, authority, dominion, and all things that are to be called, not only in this world, but also in the world to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and hath set him to be the head of the church over all things, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." And St. Peter, 1 Petr. 3, 21. 22.: "Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has ascended to the right hand of God in the heavens, and angels, and mighty men, and powers are subject unto him." Heb. 1:6: "And again, when he bringeth in the firstborn into the world, he saith, And all the angels of God shall worship him."

Therefore Christ is much greater and higher Lord than Adam was before the fall. For all things were not subjected to him, nor put under his feet. But all things have been put under Christ's feet, so that all the world and all his enemies must be the footstool of his feet.

94 Therefore, one cannot pass by this text, but this text establishes the article that Christ is true God and man. If he were not man, he could not be called Enosh, man, nor Filius Adam, man-child. If he were not God, he could not be Lord over God's work, nor have everything under his feet. For to be Lord over heaven, angels, men, life, yes, also over sin and death, is due to

no one, but only the true, natural God.

(95) Now one thing follows another, and David gloriously and subtly concludes who the sun is. In that world, he says, when that life will begin, and that heaven, moon and stars will come, Christ will be the sun. In this world he is also "the sun of righteousness," as Malachi calls him [Cap. 4:2]. For for our sake he became man, and forsaken of God, rose again from the dead, and became Lord of all, and has all things under his feet. From this sun we receive light in our hearts through his gospel and Spirit, that we may know God to be our Father, whom we may call upon, and look to him for all our good. If sin, death, the devil, and the world are our enemies, we have one, Christ our Sun, who stands by us and helps us; he also makes us have access to the Father. Let us only hold fast to the light and gospel which we have from the sun, Christ.

V. 8. 9. sheep and oxen in general, and also the wild animals, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, and what goes in the sea.

This is the last part of the dominion of Christ, which dominion Adam also received in paradise, as it is written Genesis 1:26: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. Now what Adam received in paradise, David also puts under Christ, so that we do not think and say, "If Christ has his own special dominion and kingdom, he has no fellowship with Adam's dominion and kingdom. Now Christians must nevertheless live in the world. Where will they stay, eat and drink, if Christ has nothing to do with Adam's kingdom, and the world is hostile to them and does not grant them a morsel of bread? To ward off such thoughts, David here casts out the dominion that Adam has on earth over fish, birds, and cattle. 2c,

He says, "Every sheep, every ox, every wild animal, every bird of the air, and every fish of the sea has been put under Christ's feet.

Therefore, all that is in the wide world is Christ's, the ruler. What emperors, kings, princes, authorities and subjects, believers and unbelievers, godly and godless people have and possess, all this is Christ's. All things are subject to him. Everything is subject to him. All men must be under this king and ruler, either with grace or with disgrace. So Christ has all things in his hand and power; but because he has all things in his power, his Christians are abundantly provided for; they shall find good to abide in the world, they shall also have food and drink on earth. St. Paul says 1 Cor. 3, 21-23: "All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollo, whether Cephas or the world, whether life or death, whether things present or things to come; all things are yours. But you are Christ's, but Christ is God's."

98. So the Holy Spirit, through the prophet David, teaches us in this psalm in short, round words about Christ, about two natures in Christ, about his divine and human nature, which natures are thus united, that Christ is one, undivided person; about Christ's rule and kingdom; about the kingdom of faith; how and by what means Christ's kingdom is established on earth, namely, by the mouth of young children and infants; of the fruit and power of Christ's kingdom, what it serves for, and what it creates and accomplishes, namely, that it destroys the enemy and the avenger; of the glory and renewal of the creature in the kingdom of the An

of Christ's humiliation, suffering and death; of Christ's resurrection, exaltation and transfiguration; of His dominion and power over all creatures. This psalm establishes these high articles with simple, short words, quite fine and funny.

V. 10. O Lord our sovereign, how glorious is your name in all the earth.

This verse is the end of the song. David concludes this psalm just as he began it. He gives thanks to the Lord, our sovereign, for the great unspeakable blessing that he has established such a kingdom, for which he calls and gathers his church, which gloriously praises his name in all the earth, and gives thanks to him in heaven. Let us sing to this praise singer as he sings to us. The Lord is also our ruler, and his kingdom is established and founded from the mouths of young children and infants. We are placed in it by baptism, and are daily called to it by word and gospel; we also hope with David to come to the place where we shall see the heavens, the work of his fingers, the moon and the stars which he will prepare. He has acquired the kingdom through great suffering and anguish; now he is crowned with honor and adornment, and has everything under his feet. For this we give praise and thanks to God, but especially because he has brought us to such light and knowledge, which does not come from human reason, but from Christ, who is our sun; who also died for us, and rose from the dead, lives and reigns, so that we may be saved through him. God help us all! Amen.

12. sermon on the kingdom of Christ,

from the eighth Psalm. *)

Delivered at Merseburg, August 6, 1545, printed in 1546.

[Letter of M. Matthias Wanckel.]

To the Reverend in GOD Father, Sublime, Highborn Prince and Lord, Lord Georgen, Prince of Anhalt, Count of Ascanien, Lord of Bernburg, Coadjutor of the Merseburg Chapter, and Cathedral Provost of Magdeburg, my gracious Lord,

Grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Sublime, high-born Prince and Lord! After offering my poor services and owed prayers for E. F. G., I wish and ask from my heart that the Father of our Lord JESu Christ may give E. F. G. and his dear Christian congregation a blissful and peaceful following year, for the spreading of his holy Word and the increase of his Christianity, which he demands and gathers through the preaching of the holy Gospel, all here on earth, for an eternal life and eternal glory. Which his dear Christianity, as he has always protected it from the beginning of the world against the fury and rage of the devil and the world, and has also graciously preserved it in these times of ours, we ask from the bottom of our hearts that he will continue to take it into his gracious protection and protection this year, when there are all kinds of things to worry about, for the sake of his dear Son, who has purchased the church through his own blood. As he promised us when he said John 14:18: "I will not leave you orphans"; and Matthew 28:20: "I will be with you to the end of the world."

But further, Most Gracious Prince and Lord! After Christ our Lord, when he had fed the five thousand men, commanded the disciples that they should eat the fragments (so that nothing would perish) of the bodily bread that remained.

John 6:12, how much more does he want us to take up the fragments of the heavenly bread, from which we have eternal life, and not let them perish. According to the same command of our Lord Christ, I have received two sermons from the venerable and highly respected D. Martin Luther, my dear father and preceptor (one on the kingdom of Christ, from the eighth Psalm, the other on the state of marriage, to the cathedral dean, Sigismundo von Lindenau, against the pope's celibacy), which he preached in E. F. G.'s presence. F. G.'s presence in Merseburg in the collegiate church, in the previous year, 1) as special delicious chunks, and to the best of my ability, thus, as seen here, composed, and in print under E. F. G.'s name want to go out, so that other people, who hunger for God's word, and such sermon not personally heard, with these chunks may satisfy their hunger in part. For I and many other people have experienced how such hymns, so often published and printed by pious and learned people, have fed and strengthened many a hungry person, and still do. Humbly requesting, E. F. G., that you graciously put up with such my poor little service. Given at Halle in Saxony, Sunday Johannis Evangelistä, Anno 1546 [that is, December 27, 1545]. 2)

E. F. G.

subservient and willing N. Matthias

Wanckel, pastor of Halle, at St. Moritzen.

1) on August 4, 1545 at Lindenau's wedding.

2) Compare Walch, St. Louis Edition, vol. VII, col. 2176, note.

*On August 3, 1545, Luther ordained Prince George of Anhalt as Bishop of Merseburg; on August 4, he preached at the wedding of the dean of Merseburg Abbey, Siegmund von Lindenau, the "Predigt vom Ehestände," which is included in our edition, Vol. X, Col. 588. On the same day he traveled with Jonas to Halle and preached there on August 5 on Joh. 5, 39. (Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. VII, 2176). On August 6, returned to Merseburg, he preached on the 8th Psalm, "of the kingdom of Christ." The first printing of this present sermon is entitled: "Zwo Predigt D. Martini Luthers, Die erste, Vom Reich Christi, aus dem viij. Psalm, Lord vnser Ruler 2c. The other, On Marriage, from the text Hebr. iij [so instead of: 13.] Marriage sol ehrlich gehalten werden bei allen, vnd das Ehebett unbefleckt. Preached at Mersburg. Printed at Wittenberg by Georgen Rhaw Anno XI^{vi}." This edition was organized by [1] Matthias Wanckel, whose letter we, like Walch, have prefixed to the sermon. In the collections, this sermon is found: in the Altenburger, vol. VIII, p. 487; in the Leipziger, vol. XII, p. 150; in the Erlanger (I. Aufl.), vol. 19, p. 25 and, in the second edition, vol. 20d, p. 394. After the latter, we give the text.

¹(1) This is one of the chief psalms of the royal prophet David, which he wrote of Christ and his kingdom; and they are not dark or gloomy, but bright and clear words, easy and well to be understood. He describes the kingdom of Christ in such a way that, although it is in heaven with the work, it is also down here on earth and in all the world; and soon separates the kingdom of Christ from the worldly kingdom, which is ruled by worldly kings and authorities. These two kingdoms are here below on earth among the people. For Christ's kingdom also is and goes among men here below on earth.

(2) But there is a great difference, that though both the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of the world are and are on earth, yet they are ruled and governed unequally. For the king, as the psalm says, though he has his kingdom on earth, yet he reigns spiritually and in a heavenly way; so that though his kingdom is not seen, as the worldly kingdom is seen, yet it is heard. Yes, how? "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast prepared a power." And is Christ's kingdom a hearing kingdom, not a seeing kingdom. For the eyes do not guide and lead us where we find Christ and come to know Him, but the ears must do it; but also such ears as hear the word out of the mouth of babes and sucklings.

(3) This is not how it is done in the secular government. For this is not only in the hearing, but in the work and emphasis, that one protects the pious, keeps them in justice and peace, and punishes the wicked, brutal and evil; that one also works with the fists, acquires goods and food. For with the ears you will not rule or become rich. For it is not with the ears that you get rich, but with the eyes and with the fists that you do it, that you take it up with your work, and that you do it with your hands.

1) In the first printing here is the superscription: "Eine Predigt D. Martini Luthers, Von dem Reich Christi aus dem achten Psalmen, Herr vnser Herrscher usw. Zu Mersburg, den vj. tag Augusti gethan, im xlv. jar." - Walch prefixed the text of the 8th Psalm in the old edition, which we have omitted because it differs in nothing from that of our Bible, and is not found in the original.

attack. In the pieces, the worldly government stands far apart from Christ, the spiritual kingdom; which kingdom, though it walks and is led here on earth, is not established by plows and our hands, but walks in the Word, and is led by the Word that proceeds from the mouths of young children and babes.

4. as when you see a preacher and hear him preach the word of God, through which he, by the command of Christ, proclaims repentance and forgiveness of sins, you see no plow or harrow, but see and hear that the preacher takes only the tongue and the word, and not his word, but the word of God, so that Christ reigns here on earth. So also, when we see the holy sacraments administered, wherein God accepts and gives us all our sins, grace, blessedness and eternal life, you do not see salvation and freedom from sins and death; nor do you see that you are no longer held captive in the devil's kingdom, but only hear that it is offered and given to you with the tongue of the preacher through the word.

(5) Thus, when a child is born young into the world, of father and mother, which is a sinful birth, we see how it happens; but when the child is brought to Christ, incorporated into Christ by baptism, and born anew or otherwise, washed of sins, becomes a child and heir of God, it is born otherwise and anew. Which is far a different birth than the first one we see and feel. The other and new birth, which is by water, word and spirit, is not seen; there only the words are heard; which, if I believe them, I become a child and heir of God and joint heir with Christ; not of the perishable life into which we are born by the first birth, but of eternal life; not an heir of money and goods, silver or gold, but I become an heir of the eternal and heavenly goods and gifts of God.

(6) I see none of these things, but hear only the word which commandeth me such things, and saith that they shall be so unto me.

2) "not" added by us.

If I then accept and believe it, it is also so, and I receive everything that the word commands, promises and gives me.

(7) So also in our infant faith we say, I believe in the Holy Ghost 2c., forgiveness of sins, and an everlasting life. These are things which we do not see or feel; so they are not accomplished with hands, there is no plow involved, or other outward works, but the word; if I hear and believe these things, I receive and am given all that the word beckons and promises me, namely, forgiveness of sins and eternal life. For the word does not deceive; what it promises is yes, that is what happens; what it rejects is no. Whoever therefore keeps the word and its promise also receives all that it promises and entails.

(8) When I feel my sin and complain to God, and ask absolution or forgiveness of sin from my priest or minister of the word, the minister of the word lays his hand on my head and absolves me of my sins by the command of Christ our Lord. Then I hear and see nothing, but only the word, so that he absolves me of my sins; nevertheless, if I believe the word as it reads, then it is certain what it promises me, and so I receive forgiveness of all my sin through absolution, and confess a gracious God.

(9) Now here is someone who would say, "These are great and high things that you say; if it were true, how blessed we would be, that forgiveness of sins and all heavenly goods should soon follow the word, if I hear it and believe it, then I could no longer be afraid of death, nor despair because of my sin, nor fear the devil, but all this has now been lifted up for me through the word of absolution. Yes, I say, you have all this and will receive it, as the word promises you, if you accept it with a firm faith and do not doubt it. As soon as you begin to hesitate and doubt, you have and receive nothing. Here one must not hang on the groping and seeing, but on the word, that I believe it, then all this happens to me. Faith

but I do not, but want to align and obtain it with tapping and seeing, so I also have nothing 2c.

10. Whoever hears this with diligence, keeps it and notices it, will easily and well understand and notice what the two kingdoms, namely Christ's and the worldly, are for kingdoms, with which they have to deal and send; What is the difference between these two kingdoms, namely, that although they both walk and are governed here on earth, yet the outward and worldly kingdom stands alone in action and emphasis, where sight and fists belong; but the kingdom of Christ stands alone in hearing, so that I hear the word, accept it, and believe it. The word, even that which proceeds from the mouths of babes and sucklings, 2) taught and preached: if I believe it, I have all things.

(11) No emperor, king or prince can rule in this way; he must rule by deed. If I am to be rich, he must not give me words, but money and goods by deed; giving words does not do it. But here, in Christ's kingdom, the contradiction happens. If I were very rich here, and had all the goods of the world, yet they could not forgive my sin, nor blot out my sin with all their power, dominion, and authority, with all the plows and harrows, with all the wealth of all the goods and riches of this world. Why then, and how so? Did I mean that he who had money and goods, power and dominion, had everything? No, not so; he is far from having forgiveness of sins and eternal life, even if he is rich and has much wealth, and is powerful, he is far from it. For they do not hear the word; so they do not believe, but are in darkness, drowned in avarice and goods, not heeding a word nor God Himself. Where there is no word nor God Himself, there is darkness and the devil's kingdom, from which no money, goods, force or power can help him. But if he wants to be delivered from the kingdom of darkness and the devil, to have forgiveness of sins and eternal life, which is offered to us in Christ's kingdom through the Word, and which is given to us in the kingdom of God.

1) maybe: get?

2) This is how Walch emended the text, which in the original reads: "auch aus dem Munde ... ausgehen."

is given, he keeps to the word, hears it, accepts it, and believes it, so he gets everything 2c.

12 Thus the prophet speaks clearly and differently of the two kingdoms, that he does not abolish, but rather approves and confirms the worldly and external kingdom, which stands in action and emphasis. For one must have rulers who keep peace, judgment and unity, protect the pious and punish the wicked; otherwise there would be disorder of all things. Therefore the prophet does not abolish the same external kingdom.

13. But in the spiritual realm and in the realm of Christ, when a minister baptizes with the word and the water according to the command of Christ: if an ungodly, unbelieving man sees it, he ridicules it as a foolish thing to do in the sight of reason, because he neither sees nor feels what is being accomplished, namely, that all three persons of divine majesty are present and baptizing, accepting the man who was conceived and born in sins, and making him free from the devil's kingdom, and placing him in the kingdom of heaven, wherein is forgiveness of sins, grace and blessedness.

14 So also, when a godless, unbelieving man sees a priest lay hands on a sinner and a timid heart for his sin and forgive sin, or absolve him from sin, he also ridicules it, and would think much more of it if a crown of silver, gold, pearls and precious stones were placed on him: this an unbeliever regards much and a thousand times higher than the laying on of hands and the forgiveness of sin, which cannot be compared to any good or treasure in this world.

15. But a Christian, looking at it with different eyes and heart, pays no attention to the golden crown, but has regard to the word which he hears; to this he pays attention, and keeps to it, which thus says to him: "Believe and keep to the word, and you will live forever, and be lord over sin, the law, death, the devil and hell; though there may be other sins in you, they shall not be imputed to you, but shall all be covered up and blotted out for the sake of Christ Jesus, the Son of God. What could be more comforting to us than that all our sins are forgiven us, from

and shall be destroyed and gone 1), and shall have a gracious God, and shall have eternal life? This is wonderfully said; but you must believe, and all this will happen to you. For without faith thou remainest captive in sins and in the kingdom of the devil: but if thou believest, thou art loosed from sins, thou art delivered out of the devil's kingdom into Christ's kingdom.

(16) And if anyone would say here: If I have both a mouth and speak and make words as well as my pastor, nor does it follow from my words that they absolve me of sins and place me in the kingdom of God; how then is it possible that my pastor's mouth and word should have greater power to give all the goods, as told above [4 ff]? Here, then, one is to answer, "You see, there is a great difference between your mouth and the preacher's mouth, between your word and a preacher's word; which difference David here clearly indicates, saying, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings you have, O Lord, prepared praise for yourself." Now this is a different word than my word or your word. This comes from the commandment of him that saith, Ite; "Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel, teach all nations, and baptize them. "2c. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Christ JESus, Son of God, our HErr, who gives the command to his apostles, and to all Ministris Ecclesiae Dei, is here called to speak and preach; he puts a word in their mouth. This is another word than your word, namely the word of God, which is eternal and abides forever, and says: whoever believes in it shall be saved, but whoever does not believe shall be condemned. The word has another power to forgive sins that no other word has.

(17) Now if you hear me, who am a preacher, and hear me no other way than you hear another man, nor believe my words any other way than you believe other men's words, you are condemned with me, if I preach no more than my word. As the pope did, who taught his word and not God's word, whom we also call a

1) "away" is missing in the original.

I have heard the words of men, and I am still heard by many, all of whom are condemned with the pope, as those who are attached to the words of men. So you shall not hear me as a man who preaches the words of men. So if you hear me, it would be much better if you did not hear me at all.

(18) Also, you shall not hear your pastor as a man who speaks and preaches the words of men, but you shall hear him as one who speaks the word from the mouths of babes and sucklings, who say: I believe in the Holy Spirit, a holy Christian church that has the word, forgiveness of sins, the holy sacraments, and the right use of the sacraments. This church preaches the word of God, means to believe, forgives sins, gives sacraments, on the word, which is the right foundation and the right foundation, against which all devils are unable to do anything. I should trust and build on it. This is the command of Christ, which he gave and left to his church and congregation, namely, that in his name and from his command his word should be given and left to us, which he speaks and preaches through our mouth; this we are to hear, accept and believe as his word. Where therefore this is done, it is said [v. 3.], "Thou hast prepared a power for thine enemies' sake, to destroy the enemy and the revenger."

(19) Such a power is prepared, and is done by the word, so that he sets the rule, so that when sin comes, and wants to bite me and devour me, I may then say: If you want to bite, then go to the gallows; I know of no sin, for I am absolved from my sins by the word and absolved; I abide by it. Item, if the devil comes, he will also execute me, and knight me, that I then say: If you want to push, run against the wall or against the wall. So shall I also say to hell, and to death, Eh, death, I know of no death 2c. Now as the word assures thee, so thou hast it all, if thou believest it. But if thou believest it not, thou hast and getest none, but abidest in sins under the power of the devil, and must await eternal damnation and death.

20. But the Christian church, which has such comfort and power, although it is considered foolish and despised in the face of the world, which deals with great and mighty things, has such great power and glory. But where does such great power come from the poor, despised little group, the church of Christ, which is mocked and ridiculed before the world? Worldly authority does not give it this power, nor does it have to give it, but the Word of God establishes such a power, kingdom and church, which is such a people here on earth, called by the holy gospel in all Christendom, which has the pure word, and the right use of the sacraments, and is mightier and more powerful than the devil, death and hell. And this not in one place, nor in one nation, but in the whole world, where Christians are scattered. Which kingdom of Christ, then, is established and governed without outward coercion and violence, by the mouth of babes alone, that is, by word and faith alone. These infants and minors are fools of the world and are despised. Well, so be it, it is so right, so shall they be called before the world; but before God they have other names, and a better reputation, are called *Principes et Angeli Dei*, and are so. For behold, what saith David here concerning this? [He says that the kingdom of the Lord Christ is such a kingdom, ruling and powerful in all the earth, not with armor, gold, silver, dominions, and principalities. How then does he establish such power? By the word alone, which proceeds from the mouth of babes and sucklings, and is heard.

For when our dear Lord Jesus Christ began this kingdom of his in this world, he did not take the Roman emperor, or the high priests of Jerusalem, or the best, the highest, and the mightiest of the people, but he took poor, despised beggars, poor fishermen, as Peter, Andrew, John, Jacob, Thomas, and other poor sinners, and put his word into their mouths, and sent them forth to preach. Who, notwithstanding that they are called, chosen, and sent of Christ, must yet be accounted fools before the world, and be called fools. But see how

What happened to them on the day of Pentecost? There their power shines and is noted, because from the first sermon of St. Peter three thousand were converted, and afterwards by their sermon many thousands were brought to the kingdom of Christ. Then their power was seen, and their authority and rule over Jerusalem and the Jewish people continued until he gathered out the wheat; then he set fire to the dead chaff and burned it through the Romans. There one saw what Christ would have done for a kingdom and power. The kingdom and the power are praised here by David, when he says, "Thou hast wrought a power for the sake of thine enemies." It is also worthy of praise and esteem.

22 Therefore great violence and injustice is done to us, who are also preachers of the word, that they should be so hateful and hostile to us, who bring with us not armor and weapons, nor poison, nor any other evil, but only the saving word of God. What are we doing, or what do we do to deserve it, so that they heresy us? What are the great sins that we commit? Here you speak: Yes, the pope has condemned you with your doctrine; therefore we also consider you heretics and condemned. But what can I do about it? surely I do not deserve it? surely the word and the teaching are not mine? If I did, and if it were my word, it should be condemned and accursed, as the word and doctrine of a man. But it is not my word, so I do not do it, but the mouth of babes and sucklings does it by the word, which is not mine, but God's word.

(23) We bring with us a beautiful and wholesome doctrine, the holy gospel, which believeth and giveth remission of sins, and life everlasting: which is indeed a beautiful and sweet doctrine, not ours, but of him that sent us, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. If we say it is ours, we do wrong; but if we teach and bring our own, and would guide and instruct men in our word, we would be rightly counted heretics, condemned and strangled, and no wrong would be done us. But since we are condemned, and must be scolded by them for heretics, for the sake of the holy

For the sake of the holy doctrine of the Gospel, which we bring with us (as we have heard) and yet is not ours, God have mercy on us, that we should be called heretics and be condemned for the sake of such a beatific doctrine.

24. Oh, dear God, what does the word do? or else, what does it do? What does it do to deserve that one is so hostile to it? This is what the word says and teaches, how you should get rid of your sins, death, the power of the devil and hell. Does that mean harm or something evil preached? I cried, one should run after the teaching and the word, which teaches us how to get rid of our sins, until the end of the world. This is not done, but it is pursued, teaches us to doubt, and directs me to many other places where I should seek salvation and forgiveness of sins: as that I should go to the oak in Grimmerthal, to the beautiful Mary in Regensburg, 1) to St. Jacob in Compostel and to many countless places more. What is the result when one returns home, but an empty bag and tired legs? Would it not have been better and more blessed if you had stayed at home and waited for your office and profession, to which you were ordained by God, and listened to your pastor, who preaches to you and shows you the right and certain path to salvation from the mouths of infants and minors, You are sure of the forgiveness of sins, because you have left your wife and child, you eat money, your legs are tired, and yet you do nothing, and afterwards you are even more uncertain of the forgiveness of sins than you were before.

(25) But here they say again, "Yes, but it goes away from the masses, which have borne much up to now. Well, what's the harm? If it does the harm, but it doesn't, what's the harm? If you have to go away and die, what good are the masses then? Who then will stay with the masses? Not one, they are all gone who have said mass and listened to masses. What does it help you that you have spent a long time

1) About these places of pilgrimage, compare Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. III, 1777, U 31 and 33. "The Oak" was four hours from Leipzig; the Grimmerthal in Franconia; in these two places, as well as "to the beautiful Mary in Regensburg" were small images of Mary painted on paper.

1) You have to hold on to them, too. Where have they gone, lying around buried in the cloisters? What good has the mass done them? What use has it been to them? They may have been and remained at the masses; the masses are here, but they are damned. With all our hearts we wish and grant them blessedness and eternal life; but you must desist from the masses; if not, you will have the eternal, hellish fire of it. Why don't you rather stick to the word, accept this, love this, and believe this 2c.

(26) They also have the plea and excuse that they are poor and cannot support themselves otherwise, as he also said [Luc. 16:3]; that if they cannot or will not work, they are ashamed to beg. If thou wilt have it no other way, go thy way, but I hold to the eternal, imperishable promise and promise of the word; go thou always with thy temporal goods, masses, prebends, and canonries. Well, let us see, how sure are the canons of their ransom, probation and interest? That is certain, if our dear Lord God had not given the Gospel in Germany out of pure goodness and grace, you would have nothing to lend here now, neither prebends nor canonries, they would have been gone long before twenty years. But not by us, they must not worry about it before us; but the pope would have them all gone before twenty years. How? First of all, through the pallia, annals, bulls and letters of indulgence, about which the Emperor Maximilian complained with great gloom, probably forty-five years ago, since the pope had exhausted more than five times a hundred thousand florins from German lands by one indulgence; thus they became biting and greedy for the money, came back over three years later, with another indulgence, would have liked to take so much money from their indulgence every day. After that, what did they take annually from the great foundations and episcopalians, from the great prelatures? If I have noticed correctly, they take from the provostry every year

In Würzburg, three thousand florins; in other monasteries, more; all of which is a great deal of money every year. What does the pope do with the money? He gives it to his meretricibus, cynaedis, and chamberlains; the

he tells us. Now, back to the matter at hand. So I say, if the Gospel had not come, the pope and his Roman court would have seized all prebendaries, prelatures and canonries twenty years ago, so that there would not have been one in any episcopate that the pope would not have had to lend, that he would not have taken into his power by the titles: cooks, chamberlains, stewards 2c. Which titles they work out and buy from the pope for a lot of money beforehand, so that they give and still give about a hundred florins, or even a thousand, after the title is great, for one title. For for this purpose the pope keeps approximately two thousand persons, whom he calls his commensals or table-goers, none of whom he feeds or keeps at table, but keeps them alone for this purpose, divides and gives out the titles to them in such a way that he takes all prelatures and prebends to himself through them. Then, as soon as any of them becomes vacant, his Commensales are there, ask them out; after that, they finally come to the pope.

(27) So it would have happened to you, dear lords, in Merseburg and in other monasteries, in Magdeburg, Halberstadt and Würzburg, long ago; the pope would have mustered you rightly through his cooks, chamberlains and commensals (who are not his cooks, nor commensals), if the gospel had done so. 2) For the pope, as I have said, keeps so many people around him that through them he draws to himself all the churches' goods and incomes, all the canonries and prelatures. As can be seen and seen publicly in Rome, since so many magnificent, large monasteries and convents have been devastated by the pope, such as St. Peter's and St. Paul's; item Agnetis, in which there were probably a hundred and fifty virgins or nuns inside, now there is not one left. In the same way, other monasteries, where there were many monks inside, have all been plundered, and leave no more than one inside.

1) Erlanger: "lang Fest". But the following: "You have probably been and stayed at the masses", ".....but you have to let go of the masses", speaks for our reading.

2) that is, would not have resisted. In similar connections we find the word "thäte" in old translations rendered by: non odstaret or: non urZertzt.

inside. The same large, splendid churches and monasteries now stand like empty barns, which are certainly as large and wide, or larger, than this beautiful collegiate church is; in which many people were fed and nourished before, no one is nourished now. It would have been the same for your church and monastery and other bishoprics if the gospel had not come and resisted. Therefore, one must not blame the Gospel for the fact that bishoprics, canonries and monasteries are torn apart, but the pope.

28 This is certain, if the bishops do not desist, but always follow the pope and the Roman court, they will tear apart and destroy all bishoprics; but if they undertake a fine Christian reformation, so that the bishops preach the gospel and study the canonicals, and read in the monasteries to their vicarii and the young nobles who stay in the monasteries, then they would well remain. And why should we not prefer to keep such prelatures and canonries in our lands, rather than let them go away?

The bishops, if they wanted to, could find good counsel for the matter, if they consulted the infantium and heard of the power the Lord had given them. But they do not, but seek and counsel how they may shed much blood. But why this? Because they think we are heretics and cry out. What kind of heretics are we? We are such heretics that we preach the gospel, repentance and forgiveness of sins; teach how to be rid of sins and become blessed and have eternal life. This heresy, as they call it, we preach. Oh dear God, is this evil? Should one strangle and shed blood for it? We are not heretics, but preach the holy gospel purely and clearly; nevertheless, we experience with great sorrow and pain that they reproach us in this way and seek our blood. We do not mean any harm, but would like to help, and be most faithful to it, and advise that such glorious imperial foundations, canonries and prebendaries not be given to the unholy whores and knaves of Rome, but that they be turned to the good and right use for which they were first given and intended.

But one thing stands in your way here, namely the mass, which you would like to preserve. Oh what masses! Always let go and drop what does not want to stay. You never liked to say mass before. That is certain. And I know this about myself, who was a holy monk, and for fifteen years miserably and pitifully blasphemed Christ, my dear Lord, by saying mass, yet I never liked to say mass, no matter how holy and devout I was. Instead of masses, take the Bible, study and learn the Holy Scriptures, earn and keep your prebends with a good conscience, that is better than the hopeless Romanists take them away. I did not want to take ten thousand guilders now and say mass. Since you were reluctant to do so before, why do you feel so strongly about the mass now? But if you ever feel like collecting money and giving it to the Romanists, then give it away, even all of yours afterwards; what is wrong with that?

31 But I advised with faithful diligence that, since the bishops do not do any reformation, let all things go and come away in such a way that the imperial majesty would have an understanding and would see to it that the pope does not take everything to himself in such a way, and would bring us in German lands because of it. What does he do about it? He throws us a bull for it; with it he leads us to the devil; that's all he does.

I must break off from this, I have gone too far from the matter. So I say: We, who are preachers, seek nothing else but that the word of God may sound and be taught from the mouths of babes and sucklings, and that such glorious scholarships may be given to those who diligently take it up and study it, and not to the pope and his whores, cooks and commensals, who do nothing for it.

Now this is the difference between the two kingdoms, of which David sings here in the psalm, namely, the kingdom of Christ, which is in the Word, and which gives us forgiveness of sins and eternal life, and is led here on earth by the mouth of babes and sucklings. Corporal, and the worldly kingdom also wants to be and give this, and gropes after it; but it is only groping,

and gives nourishment and protection alone. Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of faith, which cannot be seen nor felt, but heard alone. The external and worldly kingdom wants to be felt. But Christ's kingdom cannot say: I feel it, and grasp with my finger the forgiveness of sins, life and blessedness; but it wants to be believed. Now follow on, what kind of king this is in this believing and spiritual kingdom.

V. 5: What is man, that thou art mindful of him; and the child of man, that thou art mindful of him 2c. You have put everything under him.

Here the king becomes God, and David describes the king, our Lord Christ, so that he is both true man and true God, as is clearly indicated here, but so that he will suffer and die, and on the third day rise again 2c. He is God, because everything in heaven and earth is subject to him. For everything under his hand and power belongs to God alone, not to some creatures, not even to the angels, who are also under the power of the King, our dear Lord Jesus Christ. To Him be praise and glory forever and ever, Amen.

13. interpretation of the 23rd Psalm.*)

Laid out (probably) 1535; printed 1538.

The 23rd Psalm,

laid out for an evening over table after the Gratias. 1536.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He feedeth me in a green pasture, and leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me against mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil, and pourest me full.

Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

In this Psalm, David, and every Christian heart, praises and thanks God for His supreme good deed, namely, for the preaching of His dear holy Word, through which we are called, accepted, and counted among the multitude that is God's congregation or church; since alone, and nowhere else, can one find and have the pure doctrine, the true knowledge of God's will, and the right worship of God. St. David praises and glorifies this noble treasure with fine, lovely, ornamented and flowery words, and with parables taken from the worship of the Old Testament.

In the first place, he compares himself to a sheep of God Himself, as a faithful, diligent shepherd,

*) Luther interpreted this psalm one evening over the table after the Gratias. The time of the interpretation might be 1535, because Luther's words in § 77: "After this manner I have kept myself ... these eighteen years", point us to this year. Lf. Georg Röer rewrote the interpretation and published it in print under the title: "Der XXIII. Psalm. Auf ein Abend vber Tisch, nach dem Gratias, ausgelegt, durch D. Mart. Luther. MVXXXVI." At the end: "Printed at Wittenberg by Nickel Schirlentz." In the collective editions: Wittenberger (1553), vol. III, p. 277; Jenaer (1568), vol. VI, p. 335; Altenburger, vol. VI, p. 881; Leipziger, vol. VI, p. 72; and Erlanger, ed. 39, p. 61. We give the text according to the Erlanger edition, which reproduces the original printing, with comparison of the Wittenberg. The Jena seems to be only a reprint of the Wittenberg.

He shall feed it in a pleasant, green pasture, which is full of delicious, thick grass; and there shall be abundance of fresh water, and no lack of it. He also leads it and guides it with a stick, so that it cannot go astray, and with a shepherd's staff, so that the wolves do not tear it apart. Then he makes himself a guest, for whom God prepares a table, where he will find both strength and comfort, refreshment and joy in abundance.

3 And so the prophet gives the word of God many names: it is called a fine, pleasant, green grass, a fresh water, a right way, a stick, a staff, a table, a balm or an oil of gladness, and a cup that is always poured out full. And do not do this in vain, for the power of the word of God is also many. For just as a little sheep in a beautiful and pleasant pasture, with green grass and cool water, in the presence of its shepherd, who guides it with a stick or rod so that it does not go astray, and with a staff so that it does not suffer harm, has its pasture and pleasure in all safety; or, as a man sitting at a table, where food, drink, and all kinds of comfort and joy are superfluous, lacks nothing at all: Rather, those who are sheep of this shepherd, of whom this psalm says, have no lack of any good thing, are abundantly provided for, not only in soul but also in body; as Christ says Matth. 6, 33: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God" 2c.

For if the word of God is preached rightly and purely, as many names as the prophet gives it here, so many benefits and fruits it produces. To those who hear it diligently and earnestly (whom our Lord God alone recognizes for His sheep), it is a pleasant green grass, a cool drink, from which they are filled and refreshed. Item, it keeps them on the right track, and preserves them, so that no misfortune or suffering befalls them. In addition, it is a constant good life for them, since eating, drinking and all kinds of joy and pleasure are superfluous; that is, they are not only instructed and guided, refreshed, strengthened and comforted by God's word, but also kept on the right path from then on; protected in all kinds of distress, both of the body and of the soul, and finally they are victorious and prevail against all temptations and tribulations,

They only have to endure a lot, as the fourth verse says. In sum, they live in all security, as no harm can befall them, because their shepherd feeds and protects them.

(5) Therefore we should learn from this psalm not to despise the word of God, but to hear and learn it gladly, to hold it dear and to cherish it, and to make our way to the place where it is found; and again, to flee and avoid those who blaspheme and persecute it. For where this blessed light does not shine, there is neither happiness nor salvation, neither strength nor consolation, both in body and soul, but only unhappiness, terror and anguish, especially when tribulation, fear and bitter death are present.

6 Although the wicked, as the prophet says, never have peace, let it be well with them or ill with them. For if it goes well with them, they become presumptuous, hopeful and proud, forgetting our Lord God altogether, insisting and defying only their power, wealth, wisdom, holiness, 2c., and worrying besides how they may preserve and increase them, and persecute and oppress others who are in their way. But if the tide turns with them, as must certainly happen at last (for the tender Virgin Mary is a very certain singer who has never lacked a single need in her song [Luc. 1, 46 ff.]), they are the most miserable and sorrowful people, who quickly despair and give up. What do they lack? They do not know where and how to seek comfort, because they do not have God's word, which alone teaches righteousness, patience and comfort when things go bad, Rom. 15, 4.

(7) This should warn us and move us, that we should not esteem anything higher and more precious on earth than this blessing, that one can have the dear blessed word and be in a place where one may preach and confess it freely and publicly. Therefore, a Christian who belongs to a church where God's word is taught: as often as he goes in, he should remember this psalm, and with the prophet, from a joyful heart, thank God for His unspeakable grace, that He has placed him, as His sheep, in a pleasant green pasture, where there is delicious grass and fresh water.

is fullness; that is, that he can be in a place where he can hear and learn God's word, and draw rich consolation from it, both in body and soul. St. David understood well how precious a treasure it is to have it, which is why he can praise and sing about it so masterfully, and exalt such a blessing far above everything that is only delicious and glorious on earth, as can be seen in this psalm and others. We should learn the art of this, and, following his example, not only be grateful to God, our dear, faithful shepherd, and praise his unspeakable gift, which he has given us out of pure goodness (as David does here in the first five verses), but also earnestly desire and ask of him (as he does in the last verse) that we may remain in such goodness and never ever fall away from his holy Christian church.

(8) And such prayer is of great need. For we are very weak, and carry such treasure, as the apostle St. Paul [2 Cor. 4:7] says, in earthly vessels. So the devil, our adversary, is murderously hostile to us for the sake of the treasure; therefore he does not celebrate, but goes about us like a roaring lion, seeking how he may devour us [1 Pet. 5:8]. So he also still has a promise to us because of our old sack, which we still carry around our necks, in which there are still many evil lusts and sins. Above all this, our dear Christianity is so full of many dreadful things, that many fall away from it because of them. Therefore, I say, it is necessary that we pray and practice the pure doctrine without ceasing, and thus defend ourselves against all evil, so that we may persevere to the end and be saved.

The foolish and blind world knows nothing of this treasure and precious pearls, thinking only, like a sow or an unreasonable animal, how to fill its belly, or, if it comes to it, it follows lies and hypocrisy, abandoning truth and faith. Therefore, she sings no psalm to God for his holy word, but rather, when he teaches it to her, she blasphemes and condemns it for heresy, persecutes and strangles those who teach and confess it, for deceivers and worst of boys, than she does.

the world. Therefore, it will remain with the small group that they recognize such good deeds and, together with the prophet God, sing a psalm or thanksgiving song for them.

(10) But what do you say of those who have not been able to hear the preaching of God's word, such as those who dwell among the tyrants and enemies of the truth? It is true that where God's word is preached, it cannot go out without fruit, as Isaiah Cap. 55, 11. says [": "The word that goes out of my mouth shall not come back to me empty"]. So also the pious Christians of the same place have an advantage that is truly dear to them. For Christians esteem it very highly that they can be in a place where God's Word is freely taught and confessed publicly, and the sacraments are administered according to Christ's command. But such are sown very thinly; the false Christians are always many more than the pious ones. This large group does not ask anything about God's word, nor does it recognize it as a blessing that it can hear it without any harm or danger; indeed, it soon grows tired and weary of it, and immediately considers it a burden that it should hear it and receive the holy sacrament.

11. Again, those who have to suffer under the tyrants cry out for it day and night with great desire, and if only a small crumb of our bread comes to them, which Christ has abundantly distributed to us, they accept it with great joy and thanksgiving, and make it very useful to them, since our sows have plenty of the dear bread themselves, and many whole baskets full of crumbs, which they cannot smell for want of it; They knock it over with their trunks, rummage in it, trample it underfoot, and run over it. Therefore it goes after the proverb: If something becomes mean, then it is valid no more, and is despised, if it would be still so delicious. And such a saying is, unfortunately, especially true of the dear word. Where one has it, one does not want it; again, where one does not have it, one would like to have it. Where one has the church at the door, in which one teaches God's word, one walks under the sermon on the market and swings around the moat; where one has ten, twenty 2c. Miles to it, there one would want

gladly, as it says in the 42nd Psalm, v. 5, go with the crowd, and go with them to the house of God, with rejoicing and thanksgiving 2c.

(12) This, then, is briefly my answer to this question of those who dwell under tyrants: Blessed are they who are scattered under the Turk or the pope, who are deprived of the word, and yet would gladly have it with all their hearts, and in the meantime accept with thanksgiving the crumbs that may befall them until [it] becomes better. But if they have not far to go to the place where God's word is preached and the holy sacrament is administered according to Christ's command, they may well travel there and use the same treasure. As they do, they are punished by their godless authorities, both in body and in property. But if they live far from such places, they will not cease to sigh for it; surely our Lord Christ will hear their sighs and in time turn away their imprisonment. Again, wretched and wretched are they who have this treasure in abundance at the door, and yet despise it. The word of Christ shall be fulfilled in them, 1) When he saith, Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven: and in them, The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into darkness. 2c. [Matth. 8, 11.] Let this be said at the beginning. Now let us briefly run over the Psalm.

V. 1. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

First, the prophet, and every believing heart, calls God his shepherd. Although the Scriptures give God many friendly names, the one the prophet gives God here is especially a sweet, lovely name, since he calls him a shepherd, saying: "The Lord is my shepherd. It is very comforting when Scripture calls GOD our confidence, our strength, our rock, our fortress, shield, hope, our comfort, savior, king 2c. For he also proves it, truly, without ceasing, with the deed of his own, that he is absolutely so

1) Wittenberger: "The word of Christ will be fulfilled in those sevens" 2c. In the following then the words: "at these" are missing. Likewise in the Jenaer, only that the words: "an diesen Sewen" are missing.

as the Scriptures portray him. But it is extremely comforting that he is called a shepherd here, and often in the Scriptures. For with this little word "shepherd", almost everything is understood, in one heap, which only good and comforting things are praised by God.

(14) Therefore the prophet speaks this word from a joyful, secure heart, full of faith, overflowing with great joy and consolation. He does not say, "The Lord is my strength," (2c.) which is also very comforting, but "My shepherd. As if to say, If the Lord be my shepherd, and I his sheep, I am very well provided for, both in body and soul. He will feed me abundantly, protect me and keep me from misfortune, care for me, help me out of all distress, comfort me, strengthen me 2c. In sum, he will do for me what a godly shepherd should do.

(15) He understands all these benefits, and more, with the single word "shepherd"; as he himself soon interprets it, when he says: "I shall not want. In addition, the other names of a part, 2) which the Scriptures give to God, are somewhat too glorious and majestic, and immediately bring with them a pang and fear when one hears them called. As when the Scripture calls God our Lord, King, Creator 2c. This little word "shepherd" is not like that, but is quite friendly, and brings the godly, when they read or hear it, a confidence, comfort and security, like the word "father" and others more, when they are assigned to God. Therefore this image is the most lovely and comforting of all, and yet very common in Scripture, that it 3) compares the divine majesty to a pious, faithful, or, as Christ speaks, "good shepherd," and us poor, weak, miserable sinners to a little sheep.

(16) But there is no better way to understand this comforting and lovely image than to go to the creature from which the prophets took this and similar images, and learn diligently from it what is the nature and quality of a natural sheep, and the office, work, and diligence of a godly shepherd. He who has good regard for these things cannot

2) Erlanger: "der andern Namen ein Theils".

3) Wittenbergers and Jenaers: "themselves".

and other parables in the Scriptures of the shepherd and the sheep, but they will also be sweet and comforting to him beyond measure.

A sheep must live only with the help, protection and diligence of its shepherd. As soon as it loses this, it is surrounded by all kinds of danger and must perish, because it cannot help itself at all. Cause: It is a poor, weak, simple little animal that can neither feed itself, nor govern itself, nor find the right way, nor protect itself against any danger or misfortune. Without this, it is also timid, fleeting and erratic by nature, and if it strays only a little and gets away from its shepherd, it is impossible for it to find its way back to him, indeed, it only runs away from him. And if it comes to other shepherds and sheep, it is not helped by this, for it does not know the voice of the foreign shepherds; therefore it flees from them and runs astray until the wolf catches it or else it perishes.

18. however weak a little animal it is, it nevertheless has the nature that it adheres to its shepherd with all diligence, comforts itself of his help and protection, and as or where he leads it, it follows, and if it can only be around him, it cares for nothing, is also afraid of no one, is safe and cheerful, because it lacks nothing at all. Moreover, it has this fine virtue in itself, which is well to be noted (for Christ praises it especially in His sheep [John 10:27]), that it hears and knows its shepherd's voice very precisely and surely, and acts according to it; it does not allow itself to be led away from it, but follows it straight away. On the other hand, it has no regard at all for the voice of other shepherds, and if they entice it in the most friendly way and whistle, it does not accept it, much less follow them.

19 Again, this is the office of a godly shepherd, that he not only feeds his sheep well, with good pasture, and the rest that pertaineth thereto, but also keepeth them from harm. Above all, he is careful not to lose any of them; but if one strays, he runs after it, searches for it and brings it back again; he is careful with the young, the weak and the sick, and waits for them,

lifts and carries them until they grow old, strong and healthy 2c. [Is. 40, 11.] It is the same in spiritual shepherding, that is, in Christianity. As little as a natural little sheep can feed, lead, govern, defend itself against danger and misfortune or protect itself, because it is a weak, and in addition completely defenseless little animal, so little can we poor, weak, miserable people feed and govern ourselves spiritually, walk and stay on the right path, protect ourselves from all evil with our own strength, provide help and comfort for ourselves in fear and distress.

20. For how shall he know how to rule divinely who knows nothing of God, who was conceived and born in sin (as we all are), and is by nature a child of wrath and an enemy of God? How shall we find the right path and stay on it, if we can do nothing else, as the prophet Isaiah says [Cap. 53, 6.], but walk astray? How is it possible that we should resist the devil (who is a prince and lord of this world, to whom we are all prisoners), when with all our strength and power we are not able to do so much that only a small leaf would not hurt us, yes, that we could forbid a powerless fly? What do we poor, miserable people want to boast of great comfort, help and counsel against God's judgments, God's wrath and eternal death, when we experience every day and every hour in ourselves and others how we can neither advise, help nor seek comfort in small, physical needs?

21. Therefore, only hurry freely: As little as a natural sheep can help him in the least, but must badly wait for all good from his shepherd, much more poorly can a man in matters concerning salvation govern himself, find comfort, help and counsel with himself, but must be assured of all this from God his shepherd alone, who is a thousand times more willing and diligent to do everything with his sheep, whatever needs to be done, than any pious shepherd in the flesh.

But this "shepherd", of whom the prophet prophesied so long ago, is Christ our dear Lord, who is much more of a shepherd than Moses, who is hard and unkind to his sheep, driving them into the wilderness,

But Christ is the good and kind shepherd who follows the faint and lost sheep into the wilderness, searches for it there and when he finds it, he gladly puts it on his shoulders 2c. Luc. 15, 4. 5. and even lays down his life for his sheep, Joh. 10, 15. This may be a kind shepherd. Who would not like to be his sheep?

23. But the voice of this Shepherd, that he may speak and call unto his sheep, is the holy gospel, whereby we are taught that we may obtain grace, remission of sins, and eternal blessedness. Not by Mosi's law, by which he makes us, who were before more than too much timid and frightened, only more timid, erroneous and despondent, but by Christ, who is our shepherd and bishop, 1 Petr. 2, 25. Who sought us miserable, lost sheep, brought us out of the wilderness, that is, redeemed us from the law, sin, death, the devil's power and eternal damnation; and by laying down his life for us, purchased for us grace, forgiveness of sin, comfort, help and strength against the devil and all calamity, and in addition, eternal life. This is a sweet, sweet voice to the sheep of Christ, which they gladly hear, know well, and act upon. But a strange voice, which is different, they do not know, nor do they hear, but they avoid it and flee from it 2c., Joh. 10, 5.

(24) The "pasture" for Christ to feed His sheep is also the dear gospel, by which souls are fed and strengthened, preserved from error, comforted in all trials and tribulations, protected against the devil's cunning and violence, and finally saved from all distress.

25 Because his sheep are not all strong at the same time, but some are still lost, sometimes scattered, wounded, sick, young and weak, he does not reject them, but has much more respect for them, and also cares for them more diligently than for the others, who have no faults. For, as the prophet Ezekiel Cap. 34, 16, he seeks out the lost, gathers together the scattered, binds up the wounded, cares for the sick. And the weak lambs, who are only young

He gathers them into his arms and carries them so that they do not grow weary, and he guides the mothers of the sheep neatly. Christ, our dear shepherd, directs all this through the ministry of preaching and the holy sacraments, as is often taught elsewhere, and in many words. For it would be too long here to describe this in words, as the prophet will also indicate in the Psalm.

26 From this you can see how shamefully we are deceived under the papacy. For Christ has not been presented to us in such a friendly way as the dear prophets, apostles and Christ himself do, but he has been presented to us in such a horrible way that we have been more afraid of him than of Moses, and we have not thought that Moses' teaching would be much easier and friendlier than Christ's teaching. Therefore, we did not know otherwise that Christ would be a wrathful judge, whose wrath we would have to atone for with our good works and holy lives, and whose grace we would have to obtain through the merit and intercession of the dear saints. This means not only shamefully lying, miserably deceiving the poor consciences, but also profaning God's grace to the highest degree, denying Christ's death, resurrection, ascension, along with all His unspeakable benefits, blaspheming and condemning His holy gospel, eradicating faith, and erecting in its place abominations, lies, and error.

If this is not darkness, I do not know what darkness is. No one has yet been able to notice it, but everyone has taken it for the truth, and even today our papists still want to be held up as right, and shed much innocent blood over it. Dearly beloved, if we can feed and govern ourselves, guard against error, obtain grace and forgiveness of sins through our merit, resist the devil and all misfortune, overcome sin and death, all Scripture must be a lie, which testifies that we are lost, scattered, wounded, weak and defenseless sheep. So we must not take Christ as our shepherd, who seeks us, brings us together, guides us, binds us, waits for us, and strengthens us against the devil. So he also laid down his life for us in vain. For, because we have done all this through un-

If our own strength and piety can accomplish and achieve this, we must not turn to Christ's help at all.

28 But you hear the contradiction right away, namely, that you, lost sheep, cannot find yourself a shepherd. But you can go astray, and where Christ, the shepherd, did not seek you and fetch you again: If Christ, the shepherd, did not seek you and fetch you again, you would have to go to the clouds: Wolfe to be granted. But now he comes, seeks, finds, and brings you to his flock, that is, into Christianity, through Word and Sacrament, leaves his life for you, keeps you on the right track from then on, so that you do not fall into error. 2c. You do not hear anything about your strength, good works and merits, because you want to be called strength, good works, merits, to run astray, to be defenseless and lost 2c. Christ works, earns and proves his power here alone; he seeks, carries, guides 2c. you; he earns your life through his death; he is strong in all things, and defends that you do not perish, that you are not snatched out of his hand, Joh. 10, 28. To all this you can do nothing at all: that you reach out your ears, hear, and with thanksgiving accept such unspeakable treasure, and learn to recognize the voice of your shepherd, follow him, and avoid the voice of strangers.

Therefore, if you want to be well provided for, both in body and soul, pay diligent attention to the voice of this shepherd above all things; listen to what he says to you; let him feed you, govern you, guide you, protect you, comfort you, that is, keep to his word, listen to it and learn it gladly, and you will certainly be well provided for, both in body and soul.

From what has been said so far, I hope, it is easy to understand these words: "The Lord is my shepherd" 2c., namely the whole Psalm. It is briefly spoken: "The Lord is my shepherd", but very important and apt. The world insists and defies honor, power, wealth, favor of men 2c., but this one boasts of none, the": it is all uncertain and transitory, speaks briefly and well: "The LORD is my shepherd." Thus speaks a sure and certain faith, which turns its back on everything that is temporal and transitory, no matter how high and delicious it may be, and straightway turns its face and heart to the Lord, who has it

alone, and everything is and does. He, and no one else, be he king or emperor, he says, is my shepherd. Therefore he also goes out freely, in all security, and speaks:

I will not want for anything.

(31) He speaks in general of all the benefits, physical and spiritual, that we receive through the ministry. As if he wanted to say: If the Lord is my shepherd, then I will certainly not lack anything; I will have food, drink, clothes, food, slit, peace and all kinds of necessities, which only serve the preservation of this life, superfluously, because I have a rich shepherd, who will not let me suffer any lack. But first of all he speaks of the spiritual goods and possessions that God's word brings with it, and says: Because the LORD has taken me among his flock, and provided me with his pasture and his care, that is, because he has abundantly given me his holy word, he will now nowhere make it lack; he will give his blessing to the word, that [it] may be strong, and produce fruit in me; He will also give me his Spirit, who will help and comfort me in all trials and tribulations, who will also make my heart secure and sure, so that it will not doubt that I am my Lord's dear sheep, that he is my faithful shepherd, who will deal with me as with a poor, weak sheep, who will strengthen my faith, adorn me with other spiritual gifts, and comfort me in all my troubles; He will hear me when I call upon him, ward off the wolf, that is, the devil, so that he cannot harm me, and finally deliver me from all misfortune. This is what he means when he says: "I shall not want."

32 Yes, you say: But how shall I know that the Lord is my shepherd? I do not know that he is so kind to me as the psalm says; indeed, I know the contradiction. David was a holy prophet and God was a kind, good man; therefore he was able to speak well of the matter and, as he spoke, to believe it. But I will not imitate him, for I am a poor sinner. Answer: I have indicated above [§ 18] that a sheep has especially this good nature and fine virtue in itself, that it hears the voice of its shepherd.

knows well, and is guided more by the ears than by the eyes. Christ also praises the same virtue in his sheep, when he says: "My sheep know my voice. But his voice is thus, 'I am a good shepherd, and lay down my life for the sheep.'" "And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." 2c. [John 10:12, 28.] Take heed diligently to this voice, and judge thyself according to it. If you do this, be sure that you are Christ's sheep, that he is your shepherd who knows you well and knows to call you by name. But if thou hast him to shepherd thee, thou shalt indeed lack nothing; yea, thou hast already that which thou shalt have, eternal life. Item, "you shall never perish", there shall also be no power so great and mighty that is able to snatch you out of his hand. You can be sure of this, for you will certainly not miss the voice of this shepherd. What more do you want?

But if thou forsake this voice, and turn thine eyes to see, and the old Adam to feel, thou shalt lose the faith and confidence which thou, as a little sheep, oughtest to have in him, as thy shepherd. If this thought occurs to you, now that thought, that you cannot be satisfied, but dispute with yourself, and say: Is the Lord my shepherd, why then does he decree upon me that the world, through no fault of mine, should afflict and persecute me so miserably? I am in the midst of the wolves, I am not sure of my life for a moment, but I see no shepherd to protect me. Item: Why does he allow the devil to cause me so much pain with fear and trembling? In addition, I find myself quite clumsy, weak, impatient, still burdened with many sins, feeling no security, only doubt, no comfort, only fear and trembling before God's wrath. When will he begin to prove to me that he is my shepherd?

(34) You will have these and many more strange ideas if you let go of his voice and word. But if you hold fast to them, you will not let the devil's cunning, the world's disgrace and rage, nor your own weakness and unworthiness.

You can go through it freely and say, "Let the devil, the world, or my own conscience oppose me as fiercely as they can, but I will not grieve myself to death over it. It must be so, and it shall be so, that he who is the Lord's lamb shall not be unchallenged by the wolves. Let it be as it may, boil me or roast me, and that is my comfort, that my shepherd has laid down his life for me. He also has a sweet, sweet voice to comfort me, saying that I shall never perish, nor shall anyone snatch me out of his hand, but I shall have eternal life [John 10:28]; he will faithfully keep this for me, as it may be. And if, on account of my weakness, sin or other faults still run among them, he will not cast me away for that reason, for he is a kind shepherd who waits for the weak sheep, binds them up and heals them. And so that I may be all the more certain, and not doubt it, he has left me the holy sacraments as a sign.

35 The prophet did the same to him. He was not always happy, nor was he always able to sing: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. At times he lacked much, indeed all too much, that he felt neither righteousness, God's comfort nor help, but only sin, God's wrath, terror, fear, the dread of hell, as he laments in many psalms. Nevertheless, he turns away from his feelings and takes hold of God by His promise of the future Messiah, and thinks: "Let it be as it may for me, but this is the comfort of my heart, that I have a gracious, merciful Lord, who is my shepherd, whose word and promise strengthens and comforts me; therefore I shall not want. And for this very reason he wrote this and other psalms, so that we may be sure that there is no counsel or comfort to be found in real trials. But this is the noble art, to keep God's word and promise, to judge according to it, and not according to the feelings of the heart, so that help and comfort will surely follow, and nothing will be lacking. The other verse follows:

V. 2: He feeds me in green pastures and leads me to fresh water.

In the first verse, the prophet summarizes the opinion of the entire psalm, namely, that whoever has the Lord as his shepherd will not lack anything. That is all he teaches in this psalm. Only that he further emphasizes the same with fine, flowery words and parables, how it happens that those who are the Lord's sheep lack nothing, and says: "He feeds me" 2c. Throughout the whole psalm, however, he uses words that mean something different, as they read. So, when he thinks of the shepherd, the willow, the green field, the fresh water, the stick, the staff 2c., it is easy to assume that he means something else by it, as we humans are accustomed to speak of it. And this way of speaking is very common in the Scriptures, therefore one should be careful to be accustomed to it and to learn to understand it.

37. But behold how finely he can speak: I am, saith he, the LORD'S sheep, which feedeth me in green pastures 2c. A natural sheep cannot be better than when its shepherd feeds it in a pleasant, green pasture and by fresh water; where this can happen to it, it makes itself think that no one on earth is richer and more blessed than it. For there it finds everything it may desire: a fine, thick, full grass, because it becomes strong and fat from it; a fresh water, so that it can refresh and refresh itself whenever it wants; so it also has its pleasure and joy there.

(38) So David also wants to say here that God never showed him a greater grace and benefit on earth than this, that he was able to be in the place and among the people where God's word and dwelling place and the right service of God were. For where the treasure is, there it is well, both in the spiritual and in the temporal government. As if he wanted to say: It is nothing with all nations and kingdoms on earth. They are richer, more powerful and more glorious than we Jews, and they insist on it. In addition, they boast of their wisdom and holiness, for they also have gods whom they serve. But with all their splendor and glory they are a noisy desert and wasteland, for there is neither shepherd nor pasture; therefore the sheep must wander astray, languish and perish. We

but sit and rest here, though we have many deserts around us, being safe and happy in paradise, and in a pleasant green pasture, where grass and fresh water abound, and having our shepherd with us, who feeds us, leads us to watering troughs, protects 2c. Therefore we can lack nothing.

The man has had spiritual eyes, therefore he has seen well what is the best and noblest good on earth. He does not boast of his royal glory and power. He well recognizes that such goods are gifts of God. He does not run away and leave them behind, but uses them for God's glory and thanks Him for them. But he boasts most of all that the Lord is his shepherd and he is in his pasture and guard, that is, that he has God's word. He can never forget this blessing, speaks of it with great joy and praises it far above all goods on earth. And he does the same in many psalms. For example, in 119, v. 72, he says: "The word of your mouth is dearer to me than many thousand pieces of gold and silver. Item, v. 127: "It is more precious than gold and much fine gold." V. 103: "It is sweeter than honey and honey jelly" 2c.

40 We should also learn the art of letting the world boast of great riches, honor and power 2c. For it is a loose, uncertain, perishable commodity that God throws into the Rapuse. It is a bad thing for him to give a kingdom, principality, or any other honor and good on earth to a bad boy who blasphemes and desecrates him in return. These are his little ones and his suckers, so that he may fill the bellies of the sows he is about to slaughter. But to his children, as David speaks of it here, he gives the right treasure.

Therefore, as God's dear children and heirs, we should not boast of our wisdom, strength, or riches, but of having the precious pearl, the dear Word, and thereby knowing God, our dear Father, and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. This is our treasure and inheritance, which is sure and eternal, and better than all the world's goods. Now whoever has this, let others have money

1) In the old editions: läßts, that is: läßt sie.

But he, if he is already despised and poor in the eyes of the world, will not let himself be challenged, but will thank God for his unspeakable gift and ask that he may remain so. It is not a matter of how rich and glorious we are here on earth; if we keep this treasure, we are exceedingly rich and honored enough. St. Paul was a worthless, miserable man on earth, who was severely afflicted by the devil and the world; before God he was a noble, worthy man. He was also so poor that he had to support himself with his own hands; and yet, with such great poverty, he was richer than the emperor of Rome, and yet had no other wealth than the knowledge of Christ. "Against the same," he says Phil. 3, 8, "I consider everything (nothing on earth excluded) as damage and dirt."

May God have mercy on us, so that we too, like David, Paul and other saints, may esteem our treasure, which is the very same treasure that they had, as great and above all goods on earth, and thank God from the bottom of our hearts that He has graced us with it before others by many thousands. He might as well have let us go astray as the Turks, the Tartars, the Jews, and other idolaters who know nothing of the treasure; or let us remain stubborn as the papists who blaspheme and condemn this treasure of ours. But that he has set us in his green pastures, and provided us so abundantly with good pasture and fresh water, is all grace. Therefore we have to thank him all the more.

The prophet calls God's people or the holy Christian church a "green pasture," for it is God's pleasure garden, adorned and decorated with all kinds of spiritual gifts. But the pasture or grass therein is God's word, by which consciences are strengthened and refreshed. In this same green pasture, our Lord God gathers His sheep, feeds them in it with delicious grass, and "refreshes them with fresh water," that is, He commands the holy Christian Church to shepherd; trusts and gives it the holy Gospel and the sacraments, so that it may care for His sheep and wait for them to be abundantly supplied with doctrine, comfort, strength, and protection against all evil 2c. But those who follow the law of Moses or men

They feed the sheep not in green pastures, but in the wilderness, where they faint, and lead them to foul and stinking water, whereof they perish and die.

44 By the allegory of the green pasture the prophet wants to indicate the great abundance and richness of the holy gospel and the knowledge of Christ among the believers. For just as the grass in a green pasture is thick and full and grows more and more, so also the believers not only have God's word in abundance, but the more they need it and use it, the more it increases and grows among them. For this reason he also makes the words clear; he does not say, "He leads me once or often into a green pasture," but "He feeds me on it without ceasing, so that I can lie down, rest and live in the midst of the grass and the pasture, and never suffer hunger or any other lack. For the little word he uses here means to lie and rest, as a little animal lies and rests on its four feet. In the same way Solomon speaks in the 72nd Psalm, v. 16, when he prophesies of the kingdom of Christ and your gospel, that it should penetrate by force and come to all places, and says: "On the earth, on the top of the mountains, the grain will stand thick, and will green in the cities, like grass on the earth." But that David also speaks of the gospel in this psalm, he himself shows afterwards, when he says, "He restoreth my soul." Item: "Your rod and staff comfort me" 2c.

45 Therefore this is the first fruit of the good word, that Christians are thus instructed to increase in faith and hope, to learn to trust all their doings and being to God, and to expect from Him all things that are necessary to them in soul and body. 2c.

And lead me to the fresh water.

46 This is the other fruit of the good word. It is not only pasture and grass for the faithful, by which they are filled and strengthened in the faith, but it is also cool, fresh water for them, by which they receive refreshment and comfort. Therefore he does not leave it at that, that he said: "He feeds me on a green pasture", but also adds: "He leads me to fresh water."

Water." As if he wanted to say: In great heat, when the sun stings hard, Ps. 121, 6., and I can have no shade, he leads me to fresh water, waters and refreshes me; that is, in all kinds of tribulations, distresses and needs, spiritual and bodily, when I know nowhere to find help and comfort, I turn to the word of grace; there alone, and nowhere else, I find right comfort and refreshment, and that the same only abundantly. What he says here with flowery words of such comfort, he speaks elsewhere with dry, clear words, and says [Ps. 119, 92.]: "If your word had not been my comfort, I would have perished in my misery." I will never forget it, for you refresh me with it 2c.

47 But he still persists in the similitude of the shepherd and the sheep, which is common to all the prophets. For the Jews had their best food from sheep and other cattle, and were commonly shepherds, as David himself and the dear patriarchs were also shepherds. That is why this simile is often used in Scripture. But David speaks of this thing after the manner of the land. For the promised land is a hot, arid, sandy, stony land, which has many deserts and little water. Therefore more than once in the first book of Moses it is shown how the shepherds of the Gentiles quarreled with the shepherds of the patriarchs about the water 2c. Therefore they considered it a special treasure in the same countries, if they could have water for their cattle. In our countries one does not know anything of it, because one finds water enough everywhere. David has seen this and considers it a special blessing that he is under the Lord's care, who not only feeds him in a green pasture, but also leads him to fresh water in the heat 2c.

In short, he wants to show that as little as one can come to the knowledge of God and the truth and to the right faith outside of God's word, so little is comfort and peace of conscience to be found outside of it. The world also has its consolation and joy, but it lasts for a moment; when fear and distress come, and especially the last hour, it is, as Solomon says, Proverbs 14:13: "After laughter comes mourning, and after joy, sorrow.

comes sorrow." But those who drink of this fresh and living water may suffer tribulation and adversity in the world, but they will never lack true comfort; and especially when it comes to the meeting, the tide turns with them, so that it is said, "After a little weeping comes eternal laughter, and after a little sorrow comes glorious joy," 2 Cor. 4:17. 4, 17. For they should not weep and be sad here and there at the same time; but as Christ says [Luc. 6, 21.], "Blessed are you who weep here, for you will laugh" 2c.

V. 3: He restores my soul; he leads me in the right way for his name's sake.

(49) Here the prophet himself explains what kind of pasture and fresh water he said, namely, by which the soul is strengthened and refreshed. This can be nothing else than God's word. But since our Lord God has two words, law and gospel, the prophet makes it clear enough when he says, "He restores my soul," that he is not speaking of the law here, but of the gospel. The law cannot refresh souls, for it is a word that demands and commands us to love God with all our heart, 2c. our neighbor as ourselves. Whoever does not do this is condemned, and such a judgment is pronounced on him: "Cursed be everyone who does not do everything that is written in the book of the law" [Deut. 27:26]. Now it is certain that no one on earth does such things; therefore the law comes with its judgment in its time, only grieves and frightens the souls, and where counsel is not given, it presses on, so that they must despair and be eternally damned. Therefore St. Paul says [Rom. 3, 20]: "Through the law only comes knowledge of sin." Item, [Rom. 4, 15.]: "The law only causes wrath" 2c.

But the gospel is a blessed word, demanding nothing of us, but proclaiming all good things, namely, that God has given His only Son to us poor sinners, that He should be our Shepherd, seeking us out again who had fainted and scattered sheep, laying down His life for us, that He might thus deliver us from sins, from eternal death and the power of the devil 2c. This is the green grass, and the

fresh water, by which the Lord refreshes our souls; so we get rid of the evil conscience and heavy thoughts. This is continued in the fourth verse.

He leads me on the right road.

(51) He says that the Lord, my faithful shepherd, does not leave me to graze in green pastures and lead me to fresh water, and so refresh my soul; but "he also leads me on the right road," so that I do not go astray, go astray, and so perish; that is, he keeps me in the pure doctrine, so that I am not deceived by false spirits, nor do I fall away from it through temptation or anger. Item, that I may know how I ought to walk and live outwardly, and not let the hypocrites' holiness and austere life challenge me; item, what is right doctrine, faith and worship 2c.

Again, this is a fine fruit and power of the good word, that those who hold fast to it not only receive strength and comfort for their souls, but are also protected from false teaching and false holiness. Many do indeed receive this treasure, but they cannot keep it; for as soon as one becomes sure and presumptuous, and thinks he is sure of the thing, it is done with him; before he turns around, he is deceived. For the devil can also pretend holiness, and disguise himself, as St. Paulus says [2 Cor. 11, 14], to the angel of light. Thus his servants also pretend to be preachers of righteousness, and come in sheep's clothing among Christ's flock; but inwardly they are ravaging wolves. Therefore it is necessary to watch and pray, as the prophet does in the last verse, that our shepherd may keep us in the treasure he has given us. Those who do not do so will surely lose it, and, as Christ says, it will be worse for them afterwards than it was before. For afterwards they become the most poisonous enemies of Christianity, and do much more harm with their false teaching than tyrants do with the sword. This is what St. Paul experienced with the false apostles, who led the Corinthians and Galatians astray before him, and then tore away all of Asia. We can see it today also in the Anabaptists and other red spirits 2c.

For the sake of his name.

The "name of God" is the preaching of God, by which he is praised and known, that he is gracious, merciful, patient, truthful, faithful, 2c. who, regardless of the fact that we are children of wrath and guilty of eternal death, gives us all our sin and accepts it for his children and heirs. This is his name, which he proclaims through the word, so that he may be recognized, praised and honored, and he also wants to show himself to us according to the first commandment, just as he preaches about him, as he does without ceasing. Spiritually he strengthens and refreshes our souls, and prevents us from falling into error 2c. Physically, he nourishes us and prevents all misfortune 2c.

(54) The glory that he is as he now says is given to him only by those who hold fast to his word; who believe and freely confess that they have received all the gifts and goods, spiritual and physical, that they have from God out of pure grace and goodness, that is, for his name's sake alone, not for the sake of their works and merits; for this they thank him and proclaim it to others. No trustworthy saints, as heretics and red spirits are, or enemies and blasphemers of the Word, can give glory to God. For they do not praise His name, but theirs 2c.

V. 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

55. so far the prophet has indicated that those who have and love the word of God lack nothing, for the Lord is their shepherd; he not only feeds them in green pastures and leads them to fresh water, so that they become fat, strong and refreshed, spiritually and physically, but he also prevents them from becoming weary of the good pasture and the fresh water, from leaving the green pasture and going astray again into the wilderness 2c. This is the first part of this psalm. Now he teaches how those who are this shepherd's sheep are surrounded with many journeys and misfortunes. But the Lord, he says, not only protects them, but also delivers them from all trials and tribulations, for he is with them. But how he is with them, he also shows in detail.

(56) Here you see, as soon as the word comes, and there are people who accept and confess it, that the devil with all his angels comes quickly, and stirs up the world with all its power against it, to put a stop to it, and to purge out those who have and confess it. For what our Lord God speaks or does must be swept up and go through the fire. This is very necessary for the Christians to know, otherwise they might go astray and think: How does it rhyme? The prophet says above: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want"; here he immediately says the contradiction, "he must walk in the valley of the shadow of death"; and in the following verse he confesses that he has "enemies"? Thereby he gives enough to understand that he lacks only too much, yes, almost everything. For he that hath enemies, and walketh in the valley of the shadow of death, seeth no light; that is, he hath neither comfort nor hope, but is forsaken of all, and all is black and dark before his eyes, even the beautiful bright sun. How is it then true that he lacks nothing?

(57) Here you must not be guided by your eyes and follow reason, as the world does, for it is impossible for it to see this rich, glorious comfort of the Christians, that they lack nothing. Yes, it certainly believes that the contradiction is true, namely, that there are no poorer, more miserable and more wretched people on earth than Christians. She also faithfully and confidently helps them to be persecuted, chased away, reviled and strangled in the most horrible way. And whoever she does this to, she thinks that she has done God a favor [Joh. 16, 2]. Therefore, outwardly it can be seen as if the Christians were the scattered sheep, abandoned by God, and already handed over to the wolves in the harbor, lacking nothing but everything.

58) Again, those who serve the great God Mammon or belly have the reputation of being the beloved sheep, who, as the Psalm says, lack nothing, whom God provides abundantly, comforts, and protects from all danger and misfortune; for they have what their heart desires, honor, good, joy, pleasure, everyone's favor, and they must not fear that they will be persecuted and strangled because of their faith. For if they only do not believe in Christ, the only right shepherd.

and confess that they believe in the devil or his mother, they also do as they please with stinginess 2c., they not only do well, but are also living saints, who hold fast to the old faith and are not deceived by heresy, which is, as David teaches here, that the Lord alone is shepherd 2c. It is such an abominable, great mortal sin to believe in this shepherd and to confess that such a thing has never come on earth; for even papal holiness, which otherwise dispenses with all sins and also forgives them, cannot forgive these alone.

(59) Therefore I say, Do not follow the world and your reason in this, which, because it judges according to your outward appearance, becomes a fool, and would have the prophet for a liar, because he says, "I shall not want. But you, as it is also said above [§32], keep God's word and promise, listen to your shepherd, how and what he speaks to you, and judge according to his voice, not after the eyes see and the heart feels, then you have won.

60 The prophet does the same to him. He confesses that he is wandering in the valley of darkness, that is, that he is surrounded by afflictions, sadness, fear, distress 2c. (as can be seen in his history and other psalms), item, that he is in need of consolation, by which it is sufficiently indicated that he is distressed, item, that he has enemies. But nevertheless, he says, if my temptations were still more and greater, and if it were even worse for me, and death was already in the jaws, "nevertheless I fear no misfortune. Not that I could provide myself with counsel by my own care, toil, work or help, nor do I rely on my wisdom, piety, royal power and wealth; for here all men's help, counsel, comfort and power are far too few. But it is because the Lord is with me. As if to say, "Because of me, I am truly weak, sad, anxious, and surrounded by all kinds of troubles and misfortunes; my heart and conscience are not satisfied because of my sin; I feel the terrible terrors of death and hell, so that I almost want to despair. But even if the whole world and the gates of hell are set against me, I will not despair; indeed, I will protect myself from all harm.

I do not fear the happiness and suffering they can inflict on me, "for the Lord is with me. The Lord, I say, who created heaven and earth, and all that is in them, out of less than a serenade, that is, out of nothing, to which all creatures, angels, devils, men, sin, death 2c. are subject. Summa, who has it all in his power, he is my counselor, comforter, slit lord and helper; therefore I fear no evil.

61) In the same way Assaph speaks in the 73rd Psalm, where he comforts the Christians against the great distress that the wicked are so well off on earth, and again the dear saints of God are plagued forever, and says, v. 25. 26: "Lord, if I have only you, I ask nothing of heaven and earth. Though my body and soul languish, yet you, God, are always my heart's comfort and my portion." But how the Lord is with him, he now further indicates, and speaks:

Your rod and staff comfort me.

The Lord," he says, "is with me," but not bodily, so that I can see or hear him. This presence of the Lord, of which I speak, cannot be comprehended with the five senses, but faith alone sees it, which certainly holds that the Lord is nearer to us than we are to ourselves. By what? Through the Word. Therefore he says: "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. As if to say, "In all my troubles and distresses I find nothing on earth to help me, so that I am satisfied; only God's word is my rod and staff there, and I hold on to it and pick myself up by it, and I also know for certain that the Lord is with me through it, and through the same word not only strengthens and comforts me in all afflictions and temptations, but also delivers me from all my enemies, against the will of the devil and the world.

63) With the words, "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me," he returns to the likeness of the shepherd and the sheep, saying, "As a shepherd in the flesh governs his sheep with the rod or staff, and leads them to pasture and to fresh water, where they find food and drink, and with the staff protects them against all danger; so also the Lord, the true shepherd, leads and governs me with the rod or staff.

With his rod, that is, with his word, that I may walk before him in a sound faith and a cheerful conscience, that I may keep myself on the right path, and that I may guard myself against false doctrine and false holiness. Above this, he also protects me against all danger and misfortune, spiritual and physical, and rescues me from all my enemies with his rod, that is, with the same word he strengthens and comforts me so abundantly that no misfortune, whether spiritual or physical, is so great that I cannot endure and overcome it.

64 You see that the prophet does not speak of any human help, protection and comfort here, he does not draw a sword, everything is done secretly and secretly, through the word, so that no one is aware of the protection and comfort, but only the believers. And David here prescribes a common rule for all Christians, which is well to be remembered: that there is no other means or counsel on earth to get rid of all kinds of temptation, because a man throws all his concerns on God, seizes him by his word of grace, holds fast to it, and does not let it take him in any way. Whoever does this can be satisfied, whether he lives or dies, and can finally stand, and must succeed against all devils, the world, and misfortune. This, I believe, is the great praise of the dear Word, and it has been given far greater power than the power of all angels and men. St. Paul also praises it in Romans 1:16: "The gospel," he says, "is the power of God, which saves all who believe in it.

(65) And the prophet here touches the ministry of preaching. For it is through the oral preaching of the Word, which reaches the ears and grasps the heart by faith, and through the holy sacraments, that our Lord God accomplishes all these things in His Christendom; namely, that people may believe, be strengthened in the faith, and be kept in the right doctrine; item, that they may finally be able to stand against all temptations of the devil and the world. Without these means, Word and Sacrament, none of these things can be attained. For God has dealt with all the saints from the beginning of the world through His Word, and has given them outward signs of grace in addition to it 2c. This is why I speak, so that no one may be under-

If he does not do so, he will fall and break his neck. As the pope did and still does with his own, and as the Anabaptists and other red spirits do today.

(66) And the prophet, in saying, Thy rod and thy staff comfort me, is signifying something strange. As if he wanted to say: Moses is also a shepherd, he also has a rod and a staff; but he does nothing else, except that he drives his sheep with it and troubles them, and weighs them down with an unmistakable burden, Acts 15, 10. 15, 10. Is. 9, 4. Therefore he is a terrible, horrible shepherd, whom the sheep only fear and flee from him. But thou, O LORD, with thy rod and thy staff, dost not drive nor terrify thy sheep, neither dost thou afflict them, but dost comfort them 2c.

67 Therefore he speaks here of the preaching ministry of the New Testament, by which it is proclaimed to the world that Christ came on earth to save sinners and has obtained such blessedness for them by laying down His life for them. All who believe this shall not perish, but have eternal life, John 3:16, 6:51: This is the rod and staff by which souls receive refreshing, comfort and joy. Therefore, in spiritual shepherding, that is, in Christ's kingdom, one should not preach God's laws to Christ's sheep (the goats must be governed with Moses' and the emperor's rod and staff), much less man's laws, but rather the gospel, which the prophet calls in fancy words a staff of comfort and consolation, by which they receive strength in faith, refreshment in heart, and consolation in all kinds of anxieties and mortal distresses.

(68) Those who preach in this way are doing spiritual shepherding, feeding Christ's sheep in green pastures, leading them to fresh water, refreshing their souls, preventing them from being deceived, and comforting them with Christ's rod and staff (2c). And where one hears such, one should certainly think that one hears Christ himself. They should also be recognized as true shepherds, that is, as Christ's servants and God's stewards, and not mind at all that the world cries out and condemns them as heretics and deceivers. Again, those who do something else

For to preach the gospel, to lead men by works, merit, and self-conceived holiness, though they boasted ten times more of the apostles' successors, and adorned themselves with the name and title of the Christian church, and raised the dead, are certainly abominable wolves and murderers, who do not spare the host of Christ, but scatter, torture, and strangle them, not only spiritually, but also bodily; as is now seen before our eyes 2c.

(69) As the prophet above [vv. 2-4] calls God's word or gospel a grass, water, a right way, a stick, a staff, so he calls it in the fifth verse afterward a table that is prepared, an oil, and a cup that is poured out full. And he takes such parables of the table, the oil and the cup from the Old Testament, from the service of the Jews, and says almost exactly the same as he said above, namely, that those who have God's word are abundantly provided for in all things, both in soul and body; only that here he indicates this with other figures and allegories. First, he introduces the parables of the table on which the shewbread always had to lie, Exodus 25:30, 40:23, and next to it he shows what this meant and says:

V. 5 Thou preparest a table before me against mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil, and pourest it out unto me full.

70 Here he freely confesses that he has enemies. But he says that he will defend himself against them and beat them back, so that the Lord has prepared a table before him against his enemies. Is this not a strange patron? I meant that he should prepare before him a strong wall, a strong rampart, a deep ditch, armor and other weapons that belong to the battle, so that he would be safe from his enemies, or put them to flight; so that he would prepare a table before him, at which he would eat and drink, and thus defeat his enemies. I would also like to be able to overcome the enemies without all danger, worry, effort and work, and do nothing else but sit at the table, eat, drink and be merry.

71. the prophet intends with these words: "You prepare a table before me against my

Enemies," indicate the great, glorious, miraculous power of the dear Word. As if he wanted to say: "You offer it to me, Lord, so well, and feed me so wonderfully and abundantly over your table, which you have prepared for me: Knowledge of your dear word, that not only inwardly in my heart against my evil conscience, sin, fear and terror of death, God's wrath and judgment I have rich consolation through your word, but also outwardly I become such a hearty, unconquerable hero through it, that all my enemies can do nothing against me. The more they are angry, mad, and unreasonable against me, the less I take it on myself; yea, rather, I am secure, cheerful, and of good cheer, nowhere else, but that I have thy word; That same gives me such strength and comfort against all my enemies, that when they rage and rage most fiercely, I am better off than if I were sitting at a table, where I would have everything my heart could desire, food, drink, joy, pleasures, strings 2c.

Now you hear how highly Saint David exalts and praises the word, that believers win through it and are victorious against the devil, the world, the flesh, sin, conscience and death. For where one has the Word and holds fast to it with faith, all these enemies (who are otherwise insurmountable) must retreat and give themselves up. And yet it is a marvelous victory and power, and also a rather proud, hopeful glory of the faithful, that they force and overcome all these terrible, and thus to speak, almighty enemies, not with raging, biting, fighting, striking back, avenging, seeking counsel and help here and there, but with eating, drinking, living well, sitting, being merry and resting; all of which, as I said, comes about through the Word. For eating and drinking is called believing in the Scriptures, holding fast to the word; from which then follows peace, joy, comfort, strength 2c.

Reason cannot be involved in this miraculous victory of the believers, because everything here is absurd. The world always persecutes and strangles Christians as the most harmful people on earth. If such

When reason sees it, it cannot think otherwise, the Christians lie under; again their enemies lie above, and conquer. Thus the Jews dealt with Christ, the apostles and believers, always executing them. When they had slain them, or at least driven them out, they cried out: Now that we have won, they who have done us harm no longer deceive us; now let us do it according to all our pleasure. When they were most secure, our Lord God sent the Romans upon them, who dealt with them so horribly that it is frightening to hear. Afterwards, for several hundred years, he also paid the Romans, who killed many thousands of martyrs throughout the Roman Empire, let the city of Rome be conquered four times in short years by the Goths and the Wends, finally burned and dragged down, and the Empire fell to the ground 2c. Who won now? The Jews and Romans, who gassed the blood of the dear saints like water, or the poor Christians, who let themselves be executed like sheep for slaughter, and had no other defense and weapons but the good word?

74. With these words, David shows how the holy Christian church is (for he is not speaking here of his person alone), gives it its color, and finely paints it that it is a pleasant, green meadow before God, on which grass and fresh water are superfluous, that is, that it is God's paradise and pleasure garden, adorned with all His gifts, and has His inexpressible treasure, the holy sacraments and the dear word, so that it instructs, governs, refreshes, and comforts His host.

(75) In the sight of the world, however, it has a much different appearance; it is a black, "dark valley" where neither joy nor gladness is to be seen, but only gloom, fear and misery. For the devil is violently harassing her for the sake of this treasure. Inwardly he torments her with his poisonous, fiery arrows, outwardly he cuts her in two by mobs and arousal. So he also sets his bride, the world, against her, who puts her through all sorrow and heartache with persecution, reviling, blasphemy, condemnation and murder, so that it would not be a miracle that the dear Christianity would be completely destroyed in a moment by such great cunning and violence, both of the devil and of the world. For it can

She cannot defend herself against her enemies; they are far too strong, cunning and powerful for her. Thus, as the prophet paints her here, she is an innocent, simple, defenseless little lamb, which neither wants nor is able to do evil, but is always ready not only to do good, but to take evil for it.

How is it then that Christianity, in such great weakness, can endure the wiles and tyranny of the devil and the world? "The Lord is their shepherd, therefore they lack nothing. He feeds and refreshes them spiritually and physically. He keeps her on the right track. He also gives her his rod and staff for a sword, which she wields not in her hand but in her mouth, and with it not only comforts the sorrowful, but also puts to flight the devil, along with all his apostles, however cunning and sharp they may be. Over this the Lord has also prepared for her a table or paschal lamb. When her enemies are very angry, gnash their teeth at her, become mad, unreasonable, furious and furious, and use all their cunning, strength and power to cut her down purely, the dear bride of Christ sits down at her Lord's table, eats of the paschal lamb, drinks of the fresh water, is joyful, and sings: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. These are her weapons and guns, so that she has so far beaten and overcome all her enemies; she will also by the way maintain the victory until the last day. And the more the devil and the world plague and torture her, the better it is for her; for her improvement and increase stands in persecution, suffering and death. Therefore also one of the old fathers said: The blood of the martyrs is a seed; where one is executed, other hundred rise again 2c. Several psalms sing of the miraculous victory, as the 9. 10. 2c.

By the grace of God, I have kept this way for these eighteen years. I have allowed my enemies to be angry and angry, to blaspheme and condemn me, to counsel against me without ceasing, to devise many evil practices, and to practice all kinds of wicked deeds. I have made them anxiously worry how they will kill me, how they will eradicate my, yes, God's teachings; to this I am glad.

I have not been in good spirits (but once better than the other), I have not accepted their rage and fury very much, but I have kept to the comforting place and have found my way to the Lord's table, that is, I have commanded our Lord God to lead me into it without all my will and counsel, and in the meantime I have spoken to him a Lord's Prayer or a Psalm. This is all my armor, so that up to now I have not only resisted my enemies, but have also accomplished so much by God's grace that when I look behind me and remember how things were in the papacy, I must be heartily surprised that [it] has come so far. I should never have imagined that only the tenth part should happen as it is now before my eyes. He who has begun it will also carry it out henceforth, even if nine hells and the world were still sitting in one heap. Therefore let every Christian learn this art, that he may hold to this rod and staff, and find himself at this table; when there is sadness or other calamity, he will surely receive strength and consolation against all that lies before him 2c.

The other simile is of oil, which is often remembered in the Scriptures. But it was a delicious oil, like balsam or other fragrant water, and it was used to anoint the priests and kings. Also when the Jews kept their feasts and wanted to be merry, they anointed or sprinkled themselves with such delicious oil; as also Christ indicates Matth. 6, 17, where he says: "When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face" 2c. So this oil was the custom of these people when they wanted to be merry and happy; as also Magdalene wanted to make the Lord merry, when she poured delicious nard water on his head, because she saw that he was sad [Matth. 26, 7].

79 The third similitude is of the cup which they used in their worship, when they offered peace offerings and rejoiced before the Lord. So the prophet's words, "Thou anointest my head with oil, and pourest me full," indicate the great, rich comfort that believers have through the Word, that their consciences are secure, joyful, and well satisfied in the midst of all kinds of temptations.

and afflictions, even death. As if he wanted to say, "The Lord is indeed making a strange warrior out of me, and is arming me against my enemies in a strange way. I thought he should put on my armor, put a helmet on my head, put a sword in my hand, and warn me to be careful and diligent in my cause, so that I would not be overtaken by my enemies; so he sits me down at a table and prepares a glorious meal for me, anoints my head with delicious balm, or (according to our country's way) puts a wreath on my head, as if I should go to joy and dance, and not fight with my enemies. And that nowhere is lacking, he pours me full, so that I drink quickly, cheerfully, in good spirits and become drunk. So the prepared table is my armor; the delicious balm is my helmet; the cup, fully poured, is my sword; with it I overcome all my enemies. But is not this a marvelous armor, and a more marvelous victory?

80 Thus he says, "Lord, your guests who sit at your table, that is, the faithful, not only become strong and bold giants against all their enemies, but they also become joyful and drunk. That is why you do good to them, as a rich host does to his guests. You feed them deliciously well; you make them merry and joyful; so you also serve them so richly that they become drunk. All this is done through the word of grace. For by the same the Lord our Shepherd feedeth and strengtheneth the hearts of his faithful, that they may defy all their enemies, and say with the prophet [Ps. 3:7], "I will not fear many hundred baptizing ones that are set about me." And above, in the 4th verse: "I will fear no evil, for thou, O LORD, art with me." 2c. So also, besides, yea, by the same word, he giveth them the Holy Ghost, which maketh them not only bold and courageous, but also so sure and glad, that they become drunken with great exceeding joy.

81 So here he speaks of spiritual strength, joy and drunkenness, which is a divine strength, Rom. 1, 16. and a joy, as St. Paul calls it, in the Holy Spirit, Rom. 14, 17. and a blessed drunkenness, as

People will not be full of wine, which leads to a disorderly life, but will be full of the Holy Spirit, Eph. 5:18. And this is the armor and the weapons, so that our Lord God will arm His believers against the devil and the world; namely, He gives them the word in the mouth, and the courage, that is, the Holy Spirit, in the heart.

82) With such armor they fearlessly and cheerfully attack all their enemies, defeating and overcoming them with all their might, wisdom and holiness. Such warriors were the apostles on the day of Pentecost; they stood up in Jerusalem against the command of Caesar and the chief priests, and posed as if they were vain gods, and the others all vain locusts. They passed through with all their might and joy, as if they were drunken, as some had their mockery of it, saying, "they were full of sweet wine." 2c. [Acts 2:13.] But St. Peter indicated from the prophet Joel [Cap. 3:1] that they were not full of wine, but full of the Holy Spirit, and after that he lashes out with his sword, that is, he opens his mouth, preaches, and strikes off three thousand souls from the devil at once 2c.

83 And such power, joy, and blessed drunkenness are not only manifested in believers when they are well and at peace, but also when they suffer and die. When the Jerusalem council had the apostles beaten, they rejoiced because they had been worthy to suffer shame for the sake of Christ's name, Acts 5:41 and Romans 5:41. 5, 41. and Rom. 5, 3. St. Paul says: "We also boast of tribulation" 2c. Also, many martyrs, both male and female, went to their deaths with joyful hearts and laughing mouths, as if they were going to a good life or dance; as one reads of St. Agnes, St. Agatha, who were virgins of thirteen or fourteen years, and others much more. They not only boldly and confidently overcame the devil and the world through their deaths, but were also in good spirits, as if they were drunk with great joy. Which greatly vexes the devil, when one so surely despises his great power and cunning. Also in our times many have died happily for the sake of the confession of Christ 2c. So one learns also otherwise that

many die on the bed with fine understanding and faith, and say with Simeon: "With peace and joy I go" 2c., that [it is] joy, of which I have seen much myself. All because, as the prophet says, they are anointed with the oil, which the 45th Psalm, v. 8, calls the oil of joy, and have drunk from the full cup, which the Lord pours.

Yes, you say, I do not yet find myself so skilled that I could die happily 2c. That does not hurt. David has also all hours, as said above. [David also, as said above, did not know the art, but at times complained that he was rejected by God's eyes 2c. So also, other saints have not always had a hearty confidence in God, and an everlasting good pleasure and patience in their tribulations and temptations. At times, St. Paul is so sure and certain of Christ that he would not give up for the law, sin, death and the devil. "I do not live," he says Gal. 2, 20, "but Christ lives in me" 2c. Item [Phil. 1, 23.]: "I have a desire to die, and to be with Christ." Item [Rom. 8, 32. 35.]: "Who will separate us from the love of God? Who hath not withholden his own Son, but hath given him for us all; how shall he not with him give us all things?" "Shall tribulation, anguish, persecution, the sword separate us from him?" 2c. There he speaks of death, devils, and all calamities as surely as if he were the strongest and greatest saint, to whom death was a mere joy 2c. Soon elsewhere he speaks as if he were the weakest and greatest sinner on earth, 1 Cor. 2, 3: "I was with you in weakness, with fear, and with great trembling." Rom. 7, 14. 23. 24.: "I am carnal, sold under sin," "which takes me captive." "I wretched man, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And Gal. 5, 17. he teaches that in the saints there is an eternal battle, of the flesh against the Spirit 2c.

85 Therefore, if you still find yourself weak and fainthearted, do not soon give up, but pray diligently that you may abide in the word and increase in the faith and knowledge of Christ. Which the prophet does here, and teaches others to do, saying:

Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

86. Since the devil never ceases to torment the faithful, inwardly with terror, outwardly with the cunning of false teachers and the violence of tyrants, he asks here at the end with earnestness that God, who has given him this treasure, may also preserve him in it to the end, and says: Oh, dear God, grant that "goodness and mercy may follow me all the days of my life"; and he soon indicates what he means by "goodness and mercy", namely, "that he may remain in the house of the Lord forever". As if he wanted to say: Lord, you have begun the matter, you have given me your holy word, and have accepted me among those who are your people, who recognize, praise and glorify you: so now give me grace from now on, that I may remain with the word, and may never ever depart from your holy Christianity. So he also asks in the 27th Psalm, v. 4: "One thing," he says, "I ask of the Lord, that I would gladly have, that I may remain in the house of the Lord all my life, to behold the beautiful services of the Lord, and to visit his temple."

Here the prophet teaches and exhorts all believers by his example not to be confident, proud or presumptuous, but to fear and pray that they will not lose the treasure. And such earnest exhortation shall truly awaken and cheer us to pray diligently. For St. David, who was a prophet, highly enlightened with all kinds of divine wisdom and knowledge, and gifted with many great and glorious gifts from God, prayed so often and with such earnestness that he might abide in such good things: Much more is due to us, who are nothing compared to him, and who live at the end of the world, when, as Christ and the apostles say, it is a terrible and dangerous time, that we watch and pray with all earnestness and diligence, so that we may remain in the house of the Lord all our lives, that is, hear God's word, receive the many benefits and fruits through it, as indicated above [45], and remain in it until the end. May Christ, our only Shepherd and Savior, grant us this. Amen.

14. a sermon on the 26th Psalm,

at Wittenberg, the Friday after Jubilate, when Duke Frederick, Elector, died and was buried.*)

May 12, 1525.

Ps. 26 [vv. 1-5].

Lord, do me justice, for I am innocent. I hope in the Lord, therefore I will not fall.

Test me, O Lord, and try me; purify my kidneys and my heart.

For your goodness is before my eyes, and I walk in your truth.

I do not sit with the vain people and have fellowship with the wrong ones.

I hate the assembly of the wicked, and sit not with the wicked. 1)

Your love has often heard that where God's word, the dear gospel, is preached and practiced purely and loudly, the devil does not rest and celebrate, but fights against it day and night, and opposes it with all power and force, also with all trickery and cunning. By force he attacks it in such a way that he murders and strangles the lovers of the divine word, torments and chases them away, and after that he also desecrates and blasphemes them in the worst way. If this does not help, he falls on the other side and tries to harm them with cunning and evil tricks, and uses false teachers and his lying prophets for this, who destroy God's word under the appearance of truth. This is how the divine word is in the world, and it will not be otherwise.

2 Therefore, whoever wants to be a Christian should not be surprised if God's Word has to suffer persecution in the world, or that secondary doctrine, error, and heresy have to be tolerated by the divine God.

words creep in as well. For this is how it must go. And when thou seest such things going on, know that they go on thus. So the world thinks that everything will fail, for here one falls, there one also lies on the ground. But those who have God's word with them remain and are preserved. Nevertheless, through tyranny and persecution, many also fall who have recognized God's word, who stagger and porcupine at the time of persecution. However, there are many more of them who turn to the other side and are challenged by heresy, and are torn away from the truth of the divine word and seduced. We are experiencing this in our time as well. We also have persecution and heresy, cults and sects that are against us; therefore, few are found who remain true to God's word.

3 All the prophets have complained about this very much, and this 26th Psalm is also one of these complaints, and teaches that in this case nothing can be done differently and better than to call upon God diligently, and to ask earnestly that He Himself will uphold the pure teaching of His Word. And the Psalm paints a Christian character and life as it should be, also as it pleases God, and complains about the false teachers and the rotten spirits, and prophesies that they shall yet be put to shame. This is what I have often said in the Psalms, that they do not only pray against those who persecute and kill them with fire, sword and water, but also against the evil spirits, seeking God's help to protect them, so that the doctrine may be and remain right, and that the divine word may be preached purely. For with the others

1) The original says "2c.", although the sermon only goes up to v. 5.

*) In the Eisleben edition, vol. II, p. 120, Aurifaber gave this sermon the above title and noted that it had never been printed before, but had been found among the books written by Philipp Fabricius. After that, it passed into the Altenburg edition, vol. II, p. 896; into the Leipzig edition, vol. VI, p. 88 and into the Erlangen edition, vol. 39, p. 106. We give the text according to the Eisleben edition.

To have patience, even though life is weak, if only the measure and the rule remain pure, according to which life is to be prepared. Therefore we should say, just as the prophet David does here, and puts the words into our mouths, and teaches how we should pray against the false teachers (and God wanted us to pray only in this way!), and says:

V. 1. Lord, do me justice, for I am innocent.

4 The "to establish justice" is said as much as if David said: "If you have a judgment, be a judge in this matter. Otherwise God will hold a court and judgment for the poor and orphans who are terrified or afflicted, persecuted, afflicted and challenged, but have no one to judge or deliver them from the mighty hand and tyranny.

(5) But God must execute judgment on earth, for there is strife, enmity and dissension in the world, between the world, between the true and false preachers; and there is no one who will or can still this strife, but the divine Word alone; which alone must judge in this, and be a divider or judge. For whom the devil captivates with false doctrine and rhetoric, he holds fast, he possesses their hearts, he makes them deaf and blind, so that they neither hear nor see, nor respect and heed the clear, bright and public testimonies of the holy Scriptures; for they are caught between his claws in such a way that they cannot be torn out of them. The Conciliation did not help in the past either, since they had great trouble and work between the pious teachers and heretics, and wanted to judge and determine how one should teach and believe correctly. But they have achieved little; the heretics have always continued with their false teachings and errors. The pope has banished them, but it has not helped at all.

But there is. Summa Summarum, no other advice nor help in this matter, except that one only looks to heaven, sighs and asks that God will be judge in this matter, and so one says: You dear God, you know that we are right and they are wrong. But you cannot tell anyone, they let

They are tearing down more and more with their false teachings. Therefore, dear God, take the sword in your hand and strike, put an end to the game. As often happens, when the spirits of the wicked go down, and they are disgraced in their lies, and the divine word, which has long been disgraced and dishonored, becomes honorable again.

7 Thus our Lord God decrees that those who have the word of God shall first be defeated, oppressed and afflicted, but those who have long been above shall perish. So the Pabst's redness also falls away. Who does that? This Psalm, which cries out here: "Lord, do me justice, because I am innocent.

(8) We pray for such a judgment against the false teachers, saying: Dear God, make a judgment for me, pronounce justice for me. And because God hears the cries, therefore the enthusiasts and the fools must in time be disgraced and perish.

(9) But it is spoken thus in the Hebrew way, since one must often speak thus for the sake of the language. Otherwise it is called "to establish justice" when the judgment falls to one. So David wants to say: I cry out for it, and ask that my cause may be justified and judged; for it is just, and I am sure of my cause. So also the spirits of the wicked want to be just and certain, but they are not. For with them it is stubbornness and hardening of mind that they do not see the truth because of their devilish blindness. But a Christian knows that his teaching is from God's inspiration, and that it is true and righteous, and without change.

(10) It is not necessary here to understand life to be without change, that he calls life "innocent"; for we are all sinners, and unworthy to boast ourselves blameless. No one is righteous before God, and woe to those who boast so; for I must confess and say: Lord, I am reprehensible before you; coram te etiam innocens non est innocens.

11. "For I walk along innocently." It is also spoken in the Hebrew way, "walk along." When, in the fifth book of Moses [Cap. 23,

1. 3.] It is said that a man cut in pieces and an Amorite shall not enter into the church, that is, they shall not be princes nor rulers, and shall precede in his people those who are not qualified for it. Amos the prophet says [Cap. 6, 1.]: "Woe to you who walk along splendidly and mightily", that is, who are rulers and preach. So "to go forth" is to lead a class among the congregation. Just as when one preaches or rules, since he has a life and nature that he does not lead according to his person, but since he acts from God's word and speaks from the ministry of the word. Then a preacher knows and is certain that the teaching is right, and that he has a divine office, and walks in the church in God's office. Then I know for certain that my preaching ministry is pleasing to the divine majesty. Whether other people blaspheme me and pretend that I am a knave, I can still say, "I know that God will testify to me on the last day that I have preached rightly. If I were not sure of this, that I could build on it in my heart and rely on it, then it would be much better if I kept my mouth shut. But a preacher must have this defiance. So also St. Paul defies, that he leads not his word, but the word of the Lord Christ. So we can also say that he put it into our mouths; we did not think it up ourselves, but he gave it to us. And if we have Christ's word and speak it, then we also have this defiance, that we know we will remain and endure, even though the world and all the rotten spirits and heresies perish. And I can say, Lord, they are unjust, but I know that my cause is right, they will not reprove this doctrine; but if they reprove it, they do wrong, for I know that it is right in the sight of God.

012 Otherwise a Christian shall say, for the life of him, that he is guilty therein; and therefore he shall hold his peace, and put his fingers to it. But here, where his word is, all is bright and good. But because of life we must not boast. But because of speech we shall boast before God and men, that we are sure the doctrine is right. I

can say: My doctrine stands thus, therefore it is right; and that it is a good doctrine is indicated by the fact that it builds on the Lord Christ; it lets God be our Lord God, and gives glory to God. This doctrine is right, then, and cannot be lacking, nor will it be done better. If I do from the heart what God wills, and one apologizes here and humbles himself before God, the psalm praises and extols them here; but those he punishes, saying: "They hope in themselves, and defy that this one will wear a gray skirt, and that one will look sour; that one will wear a gray beard, and that one will otherwise become a Carthusian.

(13) And if you look at it in the light, their nature is such that they all trust in what they do, and if they did not have good works, they would let hope stand. But this is taking God's name in vain and blaspheming, and hanging on to temporal things with their hearts. For they teach: If you do this, you are a true Christian. Just as even now our fools say, "Oh, they only preach vain faith, faith; but one must also do the works to go with it. Item: One must not take a sacrament. Item: One should only strike the ungodly dead and tear down the images. Well, then, there is the Holy Spirit altogether. You judge for yourself which doctrine is right. The former leads me out to a work, but the latter says, "I know nothing, except to hope in the Lord. Here God can remain God, that is, to whom I turn for all good, and who will help in all troubles.

For the divine majesty is such that it gives to everyone and helps out of all concerns and needs. When I realize this, I realize that I cannot help myself. But if I say: O you must do this and that, then God is not God. That is, I hope in you; but you must go uncovered. And if this faith and doctrine stand, there is no need. Others who do not cling to doctrine are like a reed swaying with the wind, and must perish; but he who clings to God alone, and defies His grace, does not fall to the ground, nor perish, for the rock is too strong. Therefore he says, "I hope in the LORD, therefore I hope in the LORD.

1) Here in the original there is still a "become", which we have omitted just like Walch.

I will not fall." As if to say: My hope will not deceive me. The works saints and heretics also have a hope, but they must despair and become ashamed.

(15) In these first two verses, the prophet David spoke of doctrine, asking that the doctrine be pure, and that the faith, confidence, and hope of the heart be pure; now he comes to life. The latter cannot be pure and pure at all. Or, since life is to be an exercise of faith and doctrine, the prophet asks in the following verse that God may also make the outward life pure. And there he has great cause to cry out earnestly to God for this. As the prophet says:

V. 2. Test me, O Lord, and try me; purify my kidneys and my heart.

16 As if to say, The doctrine is pure, and the words and the preaching are not wanting; so also is the heart right. But even so, I still feel the evil nature of the flesh, because in my flesh there is vain doctrine, evil lust, hatred and envy; and especially that this subtle poison, namely the lust for honor, also runs underneath, by which sin those often stumble who have grasped God's word purely. And from this sin all heresies have come; ambitio mater omnium haeresium et sectarum, that one goes out, and does not let it suffice him that he lives in the common heap, but he wants to be something special; by this one secretly gets off track, that one does not notice it.

(17) Against this secret mischief one must pray daily that God will suppress self-honor. As St. Paul also says [Rom. 12, 10]: Alterum honore praevenientes. As if he should say: It is natural that the old ass always wants to have his hand in the sod. When a man is enlightened, or can speak of God and the Lord Christ, he wants to be something from the beginning, so that all the world says: Yes, this is a man who can do it, he is learned, is a nobleman 2c. So the little cat can adorn itself finely, and soon faith and the divine word fall away. We cannot sufficiently guard against this shameful vice. Other bodily

Vices are so coarse that we feel them, but this little piece can always adorn itself with God's honor, and as if one had God's word before him; but behind the roguishness there is hidden vain teaching.

018 Therefore David saith, Try me. As if he should say: Attack me, give me trouble, put shame and persecution, cross and hardship on me. All the prophets have pleaded against this mischievousness. This testing and trying is to send temptation, lest he rise up; as St. Paul 2 Cor. 12:7 also says that a stake was thrust into his flesh, an angel of Satan beating him daily with fists, lest he should be overawed at the glorious revelation when he was raptured into the third heaven. St. Paul had a pure faith; nevertheless, he was afraid of this vice. Therefore, God must hang a shillelagh on the dog's neck and subdue him.

But what are we boasting and proud of? There are many students here, if they have been at Wittenberg for half a year, they are so full of arts that they let themselves be thought more learned than I am. When they come to the country to other people, their art breaks like a cloud breast, and makes itself seem heavy to a centner; but if you put it on a scale, it would only be heavy to a quintlein. This is what hope does, that they have learned only a word or two, or have heard a single word. Then it becomes like Adam and flesh, that they turn all their art to that they would only be lifted up. That is why they do so much with it, as we, unfortunately, see now in the day that they raise such a bunch of enthusiasts that we have enough to feed on it. Once they have heard us, they think they can do everything, and they know and understand much more than those who preach.

(20) But if God were brought before their eyes, and it were remembered that they must answer and give an account to Him for the Teaching, they would probably forget about it. Therefore, it is good that they be dragged and armored through the scroll, so that the doctrine may receive a little in life. But because they do not learn anything, so they know

They do not preach what they preach; we can honestly extinguish what they set on fire and make burning. Now David wants to be shaken, so that the old Adam falls down and does not rise up, and says: "Test me, Lord, and try me; purify my kidneys and my soul.

(21) He wants God to purify him, just as a goldsmith passes silver through the fire and melts it, making it pure and clean: so the human heart is so deeply poisoned that it does not feel itself. Therefore he says, "Lord, you feel my heart, but I do not see it, unless I am rumbled and put into the barrel, so that everyone spits on me and despises me. If then I am despondent and foolish, and if I am displeased when men fall away from me, it is evil; but if I laugh when they despise me, it is good.

(22) I know many preachers now who stand and preach with confidence, for many are attached to their doctrine, and so they preach with confidence. But if the hearers were to fall away from their doctrine, they themselves would stop preaching and fall away from their own doctrine. The heart is not there. They call Christ with their mouths, but there is no earnestness. But a Christian says: "I hope in God, they praise me or disgrace me, they fall down or fall away. I do not preach for my own sake; I do not need to preach. For my own sake I would keep silent, but I do it for your sake. If then thou cleave unto the preaching, it is well with thee: but if thou faint from it, thou hast a judge over thee. And as I preach not for mine own sake, so for mine own sake thou shalt not receive it. When one sees the falling away and falling in, and that God sends persecution, then only the heart sees. If one can then let go of favor, honor, chance and attachment, then it is good. But it is innate and deep within us that we like to see people favor us; again, when they fall away, it upsets us. This truly indicates that the heart is unclean. As if he were to say, "Just sweep me off my feet.

The "heart" is the opinion of how a man is minded. "Kidneys" is the lust and pleasure of this flesh when it comes here,

what I feel like doing and what I mean. Such opinion and desire is called heart and kidneys in Hebrew. A false preacher's heart is set on that, that is where it aspires, that is where his heart is, that is where he takes pleasure, that he may seek his own honor. Therefore David says, "This is the false opinion that I desire and love; therefore take care that I do not seek to be honored and celebrated for the sake of the preaching of the divine word.

(24) Therefore it is a dangerous thing when a preacher who is right in the word of God has a great following and chance that he is praised; and again, when he is spoken evil of, he is promised, mocked and despised. For praise and honor tickle a man; but blasphemy and reproach grieve and hurt him greatly. There stands one between two spears. If he stands in honor, and the old Adam feels it, it does him gentle. Just as the tongue soon tastes and feels what is bitter and bitter as wormwood, or sweet as sugar and honey, so it hurts when someone hears shame and vice spoken of him. But if one is false, whose kidneys are not armored, he drinks praise and pleasure into himself, and laughs to death when he is praised and glorified. There, where one blasphemes him, there one grieves to death. He directs and guides the thistle 1) with the preaching ministry so that he is tickled by it, casts his eyes away from the divine word to his own pleasure, and does not say, "Rattle me well," as David says here. As if he were to say, "Let me not take pleasure in myself, nor in my own honor," but to say, "I mean your honor, and I seek your neighbor's happiness. Otherwise, if I do not seek these two things, let me rather be silent and not preach, for I have known what is right; therefore I pray, let me also be constant in this.

(25) But it is a look of faith, recognizing and seeing that good works, personal honor and holy living do not do it, but God's goodness. As the Psalm says:

1) Deistel - drawbar.

V. 3. Your goodness is before my eyes, and I walk in your truth.

(26) David's heart also trusts in this, saying, I am in the right way; the divine word has set me on the right course. I have nothing before my eyes but your goodness. My wickedness is also there, my heart and kidneys are husks; from them I turn, and turn to thy goodness. But we cannot do this unless we pray daily, saying, "Help God that my life may be rightly ordered. I am not so pure without sin, but I have begun to walk in the right way, even though I am still shabby and crooked, and there is much sin and infirmity in me.

27. in your truth, in God's truth. "Truth" is that which is right, that which is not false, that which does not have a glitter and a shine, but is right before God, as one who walks and walks in faith before God, and thereafter walks in the way of love, that he may serve his neighbor. This is the right way, that one is inwardly set before God on the right faith in His word, and is outwardly on the path, and walks on it, and lives according to faith; although one does not lead life in such a straightforward manner.

28 Now he breaks out and says why he has written these verses. Because he always looks askance at the false teachers and the spirits of the wicked, he has asked for justice and judgment against them, and says: "I pray daily that I may be purified the longer, and that my way and teaching may be pure. Now I will tell you who they are.

V. 4. I do not sit with vain people, nor have fellowship with the false.

29) To sit with the vain means: I do not stay with the people who are vain, who deal in vanity; they have something in mind, but there is nothing behind it; their doings are called vain. Such are preachers and teachers who rule and preach, and when you look at their doings, they are a vain pretense. O their doctrine is false, neither is the life right; and they are the same fellows that

They do not preach faith in Christ, but lead people only to good works. When the common man hears the doctrine of works, he praises such doctrine, and then it becomes only a sham. Just as we also fasted in the priesthood, and walked in great holiness of caps and plates, and stooped and bowed down, and pretended: He that goeth this way goeth by the right way. But the preaching of the Gospel teaches us that this is nothing but lies, and is only a pretense that deceives, that it has only the color, form and appearance of a worship of God, and is only idolatry. For what does God ask for plates and caps, for food and drink? You will not please God by it, nor will you attain blessedness. Therefore, it is a vain being. He does not want to deal with hypocrites and glitterers. The Lord Christ [Matth. 23, 25.] called them hypocrites, vain or hypocrites, who have an outward appearance; their thing glitters, it has a pretty color, and yet it is not true. Just as brass also appears from afar as if it were vain gold; but it is therefore not gold. So it is a hidden filth. Just as a copper chain is painted with gold, so that it is gilded and sold for a gold chain, so a false service can be painted with a color, so that it is considered a true service.

(30) The Lord Christ calls such heretics and the teaching of the spirits of the pagans "whitewashed tombs of death", Matth. 23, 27, because the bones of the dead lie hidden in them; inside the tombs there are stinking, rotten, decayed bodies, bones of the dead, snakes and toads; nor are the tombs hung and adorned with golden pieces, black velvet or other silken cloths. Thus, the Lord Christ Himself describes and depicts the spirits of the wicked and the false teachers.

31 Therefore David says, "Do not deal with such hypocrites, who outwardly have a holy and beautiful and glorious appearance, but inwardly they are unclean; outwardly they lead a fine and honorable life and manner, but inwardly their heart is full of despair, of pride and ambition, of avarice and usury and all filthiness; and where there is room, they break

These vices all come out. For when they are in fear and distress, they despair; then they hope, defy, and insist on the multitude and the multitude that adheres to their doctrine. So their heart is full of hope, even though they could be much different by heart.

32 Therefore he says, O Lord, judge me not to deal with such fellows; for we shall find such men while we live in the world. Our fools can also pretend to be delicious, as now and then they fester, and the fanciers become many; but one must always pray against them in this way.

But how to do it? How can we avoid them? I must be among them physically, we must consider this; but we must not accept their teaching. This then is a spiritual shunning or fleeing, when one separates himself from them with his heart, though he remains with them with his body. He who is a Christian and adheres to the true, pure, divine word, and hears a preacher who may be or be called his good friend, but if he does not preach the divine word, he does not hold with him if he is wrong, or uses the word of God as a pretense, or as a camouflage. Therefore it is said: Either preach differently and rightly, or, if you do not want to, then I will not keep it with you. We cannot avoid outward fellowship, for we must eat and drink, buy and sell with one another; but we must not take their doctrine into our hearts, nor hold it there with them, even as they do not accept my doctrine; and I do not hope that the whole world will accept the gospel.

V. 5. I hate the assembly of the wicked, and do not sit with the wicked.

I am still an enemy to them and will have nothing to do with the wicked. I mean it from the heart, as the mouth says. I turn away from them with my heart. For one should have nothing to do with the wicked and the ungodly; as otherwise the Psalm says: *Perfecto odio oderam eos* [Ps. 139, 22], and the first Psalm also blessedly praises the Christians who speak out and refrain from the ungodly, since David says Ps. 1, 1: "Blessed is he who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor treads in the way of the wicked.

in the way of sinners, or sit where scoffers sit." For if one otherwise deals much with them, then one also makes oneself partaker of their false teaching, lies and error in the end. For he who attacks mockery defiles himself with it. Thus the 18th Psalm, v. 26, also says: "With the saints you are holy, and with the pious you are pious." Item, v. 27: "With the pure you are pure, and with the perverse you are perverse."

35 Now a question arises: Does not the Lord Christ command us to love our enemies? How does David boast that he hates the assembly of the wicked and does not sit with the wicked? Shall we do them all good, and gather fiery coals upon the heads of their enemies? Yes, I should hate them, but not otherwise than for the sake of doctrine; otherwise I should leave my service, whether I might yet convert some of them. For the sake of the person I should love them, but for the sake of the doctrine I should hate them. And so I must hate them, or hate God, who gives and wills that one should cleave to his word alone. Then it is a blessed hatred and enmity that proceeds out of love; for love goes under faith, and faith is a master in love. Then a Christian says: I will not forsake God for the sake of man. For what I cannot love with God, that shall I hate. If then they preach something that is against God, all love and friendship perish; there I hate thee, and do thee no good. For faith is to be above, and there hatred begins, and love is out, when it concerns the word of God. But where it concerns my person, also my goods, or my honor and body, there I should show him vain honor and service. For these goods of God are given by God to help your neighbor, and they are not the word of God, and they may be put in the redoubt and put away. But do not put the word of God into the redoubt, for that is the word of our Lord God. Then say, I will gladly leave that which I have from God, which is given me for your sake; but that which is God's own, and which is due to our Lord God, I will not lose, nor let it go. And give

If I give you my temporal goods, God may give me others, but I will keep God for myself. Thus, the temporal gifts and goods that we have received from God can be given away. Therefore, faith is the rule, the measure, and the master of love, as long as the word of God remains pure and faith continues to flourish.

(36) Then David said, "I do not hate them because they do me harm and evil, or because they lead a wicked and evil life, but because they despise, desecrate, blaspheme, falsify and persecute the word of God. So you see how one should stand, also how one should be prepared against the false teachers and the false spirits.

15. interpretation of the 37th Psalm of David,

to teach and comfort a Christian man against the mutiny of the wicked and sacrilegious
(Gleissner.)

Issued August 12, 1521.

To the poor little group of Christ at Wittenberg Doctor Martinus Luther.

Grace and peace from God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. St. Paul, having preached in many places and now imprisoned in Rome, did not cease to care for those he had converted, with supplications to God, comforting and strengthening them in writings, as his epistles show. According to the same example, there is no doubt that

Since we, by the grace of God, have heard and known the true and righteous gospel, which God has been pleased to open to you partly through me, a poor man, I should not and cannot be without concern that wolves do not come after me into the sheepfold.

2. and even though by the grace of God

*On his way back from Worms, Luther was seized by princely horsemen and brought to Wartburg Castle in the night of May 4-5, 1521, where he was hidden. There he continued the interpretation of the Psalter, and first completed the translation and explanation of the 68th Psalm, which he sent to Melancthon in Wittenberg for printing on May 26 (De Wette, Vol. II, p. 6). Other psalms followed, of which the 37th Psalm is one. The first edition was published under the title: "Der sechs vn dreysstgigst Psalm David eynen Christlichen Menschen tzu leren vn trösten Widder die Müttereh der bößenn vund freueln Gleyßner. Martin Luther. 1921." At the end: "Gedruckt tzu Wittenbergk Montag nach Laurentij. 1921." The printing is by Johann Grüenberg in Wittenberg. Two other editions went out in the same Officin in the same year, exactly under the same title, but somewhat different internally. In total, the Weimar edition counts eleven individual editions, including three Augsburg printings, one by Silvan Ottmar, two by Jörg Nadler. Another Wittenberg edition will be a reprint. Three of the others are dated, 1522, 1524, and 1525. In the collective editions, this writing is found: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. III, bl. I; in the Jena (1564), vol. I, p. 526d; in the Altenburger, vol. I, p. 813; in the Leipziger, vol. VI, p. 94 and in the Weimarschen, vol. VIII, p. 205. This psalm is also printed by De Wette, vol. Because Luther later included this Psalm in the four Psalms of Consolation to Queen Mary of Hungary (the first writing in this volume), Walch, and after him the Erlangen edition, vol. 39, p. 123, only brings the attribution to the Wittenbergers and the conclusion, along with "a few additions", which, as Walch says, the first edition of 1521 has more. This procedure is, we agree with the Weimar edition, "a step backwards compared to the older collective editions", because the 36th (37th) Psalm in the four Psalms of consolation is, with respect to the wording of the text and the commentary, a reworking of the edition of 1521. Therefore, we also give it completely according to the Weimar edition. Our writing is also found in Latin translation in the Latin Wittenberg edition (1558), Dom. VII, col. 515 l>, in des Vincentius Obsopöus Nartini Dmderi epItolaruin kurraZo, which has found acceptance there. However, by far the largest part of the conclusion, namely from the second paragraph on: "You may notice this about the Lovonians", is omitted. Instead, there are only the few words: kropant Iroc ouotquot kaatenus, nřiversus ine aontliotati knnt. Vene V niete, ^nno Ll.v.XXI. postrickie D-aurentii. The translator thus considers the date of the imprint to be that of the letter.

You have so many others in my place that I would have no need for such care, but of course the favor of the gospel demands that we also bear the rest of the care. We are not yet worthy, I regret to say, of suffering anything for the sake of the truth, because only disfavor, hatred, envy, blasphemous words, shame and disgrace from the papists. However, if God had not resisted so far, so much would have been attached to the bloodthirsty murderers of souls, we would have long since been torn in two by them, as David says in Ps. 124:6. Therefore, our suffering is not yet higher than that they call us Viklefists, Hussites, heretics, and most shamefully; and if they are not able to do more in 1) us, they atone in the meantime for their courage in our name and Christian honor.

But let go, dear man, let go! He is above who will judge it. We may boast of God's grace, of which they must be ashamed in their hearts until now, namely, that we have never shied away from the light, which they have feared until now, as the evil spirit fears the judgment. They must confess without thanksgiving, and hear with great pain and sorrow, that I have now presented myself three times, not for my friends, but for themselves, my enemies, with a request to prove the cause and reason for our faith; namely, first at Augsburg before the Cardinal, immediately before the chief of my worst enemies, who almost fled nothing but to hear the cause of my teaching, and would rather I had not come. Secondly [1519], I stood at Leipzig, as you know, before those who did not like to see us, and yet all their courage and cunning helped them nothing. Thirdly [1521], now at Worms, where I offered myself so highly that I would pardon the imperial escort and surrender my life to it. O what a mockery they put in there. I hoped that there bishops and doctors would have tried me rightly: so the opinion was that I should only recant. God gave grace that not all princes and estates consented to such reproach. Otherwise, I would have been ashamed to death of the German country for allowing the Papal tyrants to so rudely ape and fool it.

It was all the enemy's gear, as everyone knows.

4 Now behold, these three offerings and appearances I praise, not as having been done by us, but that we recognize and exalt God's grace, and take comfort and comfort in Him, who makes our enemies so stupid and despondent that they are not all so bold as to hear or dispute a poor beggar present in the midst of their hands; but flee the light like bats, and like night ravens they howl ow, ow, in the darkness, thinking to frighten us with it.

When should they be so bold that they or one of their number should also come to us in Wittenberg, and present the same charges and interrogations? which would not only be fitting for them, but also for those who boast of their art above us, so that it might be recognized once and for all how their art is not in the clamor of the throat, but in the head and brain! Yes, because they set themselves up [as] judges and shepherds, and judge us so freely, they are guilty of disputing us, of coming to us, and of defending their faith manfully.

But what do they do? They are the largest group, we the smallest; they are our mighty, we subservient; they are the most learned, we the most unlearned; they are the most Christian, we the most heretical. In addition, whether they are afraid, we offer them escort, free food and lodging. Above this we ask them for God's sake to prove themselves to us. None of them helps, but [they] remain alone with themselves, under their part; there they conclude, there they judge, there they condemn without all questioning of the opposing part, speak and shout that they are honest Christian men, who act Christian; there is no forehead that is ashamed.

7) Oh how our ears would ring, if they would raise a little quent 3) of this fame against us! How 4) we poor people would have to be their bearers of shame! But we must take their shameful bearing for honor and price. O of the miserable, afflicted, forsaken Christian faith, which has such shy

2) Weimarsche: "unßern".

3) In the Weimarschen: "quentin".

4) Weimarsche: where.

1) Wittenberger: ref.

learn bats and light-headed, field-fugitive protectors, who only hoard with cries and boasts in the sand, where they are alone, and where only a few disagreeable humans look out, crawl to angles like mice!

(8) And if all these things do not help them, they turn to some loose fellows who attack us with blasphemous writings and evil books, hoping to cover and adorn their disgrace before the common man, although they know that these same scribes are as skillful in the matter as a donkey is in playing a harp.

(9) Because they, having been pushed with writings, recognize themselves unfit to act with writings in the light, [it is] henceforth not to be resented by poor men, that yet they console their shame with much writing without writing, and with cursing, blaspheming, and malediction. Therefore I will let them bleed themselves weary and blaspheme; [it] is enough that we have writing, they do not have writing; we step on the plan, they crawl into corners, which honor we gladly grant them, because they do not want otherwise.

(10) And that I may get back on track, because you, poor people, must bear with me the torture of our name from the highly famous and highly learned hare men, and you are not all of the same strong mind, I have undertaken to write a letter of comfort, so that you will not be frightened before the hare panthers whether I am not with you. But since I am not the man who, as St. Paul, could write and comfort from his own spiritual wealth, I have undertaken to translate the Scripture that is full of consolation, as St. Paul says Rom. 15, 4, namely the 37th 1) Psalm, and to send it to you with short glosses, which, in my opinion, rhymes almost exactly with this matter; for it sweetly and motherly silences the movement of anger against the blasphemers and wanton offenders. Since it is naturally painful, so the wrongdoers

not only blaspheme according to all their will, but also want to be right and gain honor from it, and are quick to do so for a while, until their day comes.

(11) Let no one make him doubt that our adversaries are of the kind reproached in this psalm, and we are those who are comforted in it. For we, by the grace of God, stand by the Scriptures and have their understanding, from which those fear, shun, flee, and yet wantonly blaspheme the truth. Let them go. If they had been worthy of the truth, they would have converted long ago from so many of my writings.

(12) I teach them, they blaspheme me. 2) I ask them, they mock me. I scold them, they are angry. I ask for them, they reject it. I forgive them their wrongdoing, they do not want it. I am ready to give myself for them, so they deny it. What should I do more than Christ, who says Ps. 109, 17: "He did not want to be given, therefore it should come far enough from him. He wanted to have malediction, so he shall be clothed with it."

(13) What does not belong to heaven, no one can bring in if it is torn in pieces. But what should go in, must go in, if all the devils clung to it and tore themselves apart. St. Paul [Titus 3:10, 11] says: "Such a stubborn man is to be avoided, after two warnings, because he has certainly gone wrong and his judgment has already passed over him."

14 However, for the poor people who are still ignorantly deceived by them, we should not cease to pray and do what we can for them, so that we may snatch them out of the jaws of the murderer of souls in Rome and his apostles. Hereby commanded to God, who graciously preserves your faith and understanding in Christ. Amen.

1) In the original, according to the Vulgate count, as well as in the superscription: "36."

2) Weimarsche: me them.

The seventh*) and thirtieth Psalm

of the royal prophet David,

To quench the anger and displeasure in the challenge of the wicked and the wanton.

V. 1. Do not be angry with the wicked enemy; do not let the wicked anger you.

How immediately the prophet takes hold of and strikes the heart's concern in this challenge and points out all the causes of it, saying, first of all: "O man, you are angry, you also have cause to be angry, as you think. For I confess, they are wicked men, and do thee wrong and much evil, that nature is eighth, a just cause of wrath. But not so, dear child, let grace and not nature rule here, break the wrath and quiet yourself a little while; let them be evil, let them do evil, hear me, it shall not hurt thee. So the man says: Yes, when will it stop? who can hold the length? He answers:

V. 2. for like grass they will be cut down in haste, and like the green herb they will wither.

A fine likeness is this, terrible to the glorifiers and comforting to the afflicted. How finely he lifts us out of our face and sets us before God's face! Before our face the multitude of the gleamers green, blossom, and multiply, and cover the whole world, that they alone may appear as the green grass covers and adorns the earth. But in the sight of God, what are they? Hay, which is to be made sheer, and the higher the grass grows, the nearer to it are the scythes and pitchforks 1). So the higher, farther, stronger the wicked green and hover above, the nearer is their subjection. Why would you then be angry, if their mutiny is such a short being? So then you say: What shall I do in the meantime? What shall I do until this is done? Listen, great promise!

1) The accuracy of the Weimar edition goes so far that here, where the text of the first edition reads "hewgablen", four variants are given, namely: "hewgablen C hew gablen H hew gabeln K hewgablen L".

V. 3. Put your hope in God and do good, stay in the land and nourish yourself in faith.

Then he takes away all worry completely and sets the heart at rest, 2) as if to say: Dear child, let your worries go, don't think how you will take revenge, how you will let her see a piece again, how you might do something to displease her. Put away such thoughts! They are human and evil thoughts. Put your hope in God, wait what he will make of it, you go for yourself, for no one's sake leave doing good, remain in doing good, as you have begun, where and to whom you may, and give them not evil for evil, but good for evil.

But if you think that you would flee and go to another place, that you would be rid of them and come from them: No, not so, stay in the land, live where you are, do not change or alter your dwelling or land for their sake, but nourish yourself in faith, do your work and trade as before. If they hinder you or damage you and give you cause to flee, let go, remain in faith and do not doubt; God will not let you. Only do thine own, work and feed thyself, and let him rule. [Thou shalt not cease from nourishing thyself; though they hinder thee in one thing, God, if thou hopeest, will give thee in another, as he did to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, who also were thus tempted.

V. 4. And have your desire in God, and he will give you the desire of your heart.

That is, do not let it grieve thee that God thus deals with thee; let such a will of His be well pleasing to thee, yea, be satisfied thyself in it, as in the very best and divine will, behold, then thou hast

2) Weimarsche: "to rebuke".

*) In the original: six.

you this comforting promise: He will give you everything your heart desires. What more do you want? Only see to it that you, instead of the annoyance, so you are exhausted by them, practice this pleasure and good pleasure in divine will, so they will not only do you no harm, but your heart will also be full of peace and joyfully wait for this promise of God.

V. 5. Command God your ways and hope in Him, and He will do it well.

Not that thou shouldest walk idly, but thy ways, works, words, and doings, command God, judge not thyself. For only God must be commanded so that we do nothing; but whatever we do, whether it is promised, spurned, blasphemed, or hindered by the oppressors, we must not therefore become soft and desist, but always continue, and let them exercise their courage, commanding God the matter; who will do well on both sides, which is right.

V. 6. and will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday.

This is the greatest worry of the weak-minded, that they will become displeased with the courageous. For they fear that their cause will be destroyed and darkened, because they see the adversary's rage soaring high and hovering above. Therefore he comforts us and says: "Let it be, dear child, that you and your cause are swept away with clouds and downpours, and that they are utterly destroyed in the eyes of the world and buried in darkness, while their cause soars upward and shines like the sun. If you command God to do your business, if you hope and wait for him, be sure that your justice and righteousness will not remain in darkness. It must come forth and be known to everyone as publicly as the bright noon, so that all those who have suppressed and darkened you will be put to shame. It is only a matter of waiting, so that you do not hinder God in this by your anger, displeasure and annoyance. Therefore he admonishes again:

V. 7. Keep God quiet and let him do with you; do not be angry with the man who is happy in what he does and does it according to his will.

As if he should chase: It wants to annoy you that you feel unhappiness in the right thing, and does not want to go as you would like, and yet see that [it] goes to the wrong according to all his will, that a saying has flowed from this: The greater roguery, the better happiness. But be wise, dear child, do not let this move you, hold out for God; your heart's desire will also come abundantly. But it is not yet time. The happiness of the shawl must proceed and have its time until [it] comes to pass. However, you must command God, be satisfied in Him, let His will be done, so that you do not hinder His work in you and in your enemy, as those do who do not cease to rage, because they have brought their thing either through with their heads or to ruins.

He needs here a fine Hebrew word: *Sile Domino et formare ei* [XX XXXXXXXX XXXX XXX], Be silent, and make yourself beautiful. Just as a fruit in the womb is made by God, so in this case you are also conceived in God, and He will make you into a proper form if you keep still.

V. 8. Be still thy wrath, and cease thy anger; be not angry, that thou do evil.

Behold, how diligently he warns that we not repay evil with evil, as nature is wont to do. And what is the use of such anger? It does not make things better, but only leads them deeper into the mud. And even if it turns out for the best that you lie on top and win, what have you won? You have prevented God, thus losing His grace and favor, and you have become like the evil doers and will perish like them, as follows.

V. 9 For all who do evil will be cut off, but those who wait for God will possess the land.

It does not help you that you have not started, or that you are irritated. For it is a bad, free judgment: Whoever does evil, irritated or unirritated, will be exterminated. This can also be seen in all the world, in all history. But he who waits for God remains, so that the evil-doer perishes next to him. Who could wait so long! The evil

Men are so ripe that if no one drives them away, they may not abstain themselves, they cause a wanton calamity upon their necks, which by and by destroys them. For the ripe grass must become hay, and shall wither in it even on the stem. It is an evil man nobody so untrustworthy and disturbing, as he himself. We see this in the murderers, thieves, tyrants and the like.

V. 10. there is still one of mine, so the wicked is no more, then you will notice his place, and it is no more.

This explains what is said above [v. 2], that they are like grass that is cut down quickly, so that our concern may be satisfied, which fears that the wicked remain too long. But may you say, "Yes, I see that the wicked commonly remain long, even coming to the grave with honor. Answer: This is certainly because the other party has not kept to this psalm, but has prevented and spoiled the matter with anger, raging, grumbling, complaining and shouting. Therefore, because there was no one to command his cause to God and to wait for his work, the judgment of the next verse passed over both parties, and all those who did evil were destroyed. But if one part had turned to God, the other part would certainly and quickly have perished alone, as this verse says. Therefore, we do not see this example of the Psalms in the world, for each one of them forsakes God and submits to protect himself with rights or fencing. Thus God is prevented from doing the work that this Psalm praises Him for. Solomon also says Ecclesiastes 7:16: "The righteous perishes in his righteousness, and the wicked lives long in his wickedness," which must be said of the righteous and the unrighteous, who are not partial to one another, as this Psalm says, but as is also written in the Book of Wisdom, Cap. 4, 10. f., that the righteous is often quickly taken away, so that he is not deceived, and the unrighteous remain long in their sins. But there is more to be said of this, for now [the] time gives.

V.11. But the meek shall possess the land, and shall prosper in the multitude of peace.

This also confirms what is said above [v. 9], how the righteous remain after the destruction of the wicked. Not that they remain on earth forever, but that their cause comes to an end and peace with honor, even on earth, which peace they have earned with meekness and inner peace.

V. 12: The wicked rages against the righteous, and gnashes his teeth at him.

But this is said for the comfort of the sissies who worry and complain about how angry and malicious their adversaries are. I call impium an ungodly man, because it actually means the one who neither trusts nor believes in God, who still lives in nature out of himself and his free will, as especially are the gleamers, the scholars and seeming saints, as in distant times are popes, bishops, clergymen, monks, doctors and the like people, who by nature must rage against the holy gospel, as we see that they also do viciously. But what does their raging and blustering help? Listen to what follows:

V. 13. But God laughs at him, for he sees that his day is coming.

How could we be given greater comfort that the raging enemies of the Gospel use all their power and malice, mean to tear the righteous (that is, the believer in God) with teeth with all their earnestness, and God so utterly despises them that He laughs at them, because He sees how briefly they will rage, and their day is not far off? Not that God laughs like a man, but that it is ridiculous to look at in truth, that the foolish men are so nearly raging and doing great things, which they may not accomplish a hair's breadth. Just as a ridiculous fool would be, who would take a long spear and a short sword (as we saw from one of them the other day) and would stab the sun down from the sky, and would shout once at it, as if he had done an honest stabbing. 1)

1) Hieronymus Emser. Compare Col. 9.

V. 14: The wicked bare their sword, and draw their bow, to cut down the lowly and the poor, to slay them that are in the way of righteousness.

The sword and the bow are called here the poisonous, evil tongues, that they may blaspheme, revile, pervert, accuse and defile the cause of the righteous, that the pious may come to hate, persecution and death thereby and be destroyed. Thus saith the 57th Psalm, v. 5: "The tongues of the children of men are weapons and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword." This is shown here by the Hebrew word "tongue", which translates as

The wicked put on the sword, as one opens a door or mouth, to show the sword of their tongue in their poisonous, harmful mouth, which they open wide, pouring out great lies and blasphemy. With it they strike at the righteous, whether they want to cut him down and slaughter him (that is), not only kill him, but according to their will they burrow and swarm in him. 1) He also calls the righteous "the lowly and the poor," because they are despised and lowly before the 2) great, arrogant swearing and blowing of the wicked. But what do they judge? Listen:

V. 15. Their sword will go into their heart, and their bow will be broken.

That is, their evil words must devour them again and strangle them forever, so that their conscience, pierced with them in death, is tormented forever. The bow will be broken, so that everything will be in vain, and they will not be able to do anything with all their rage, but to bring such misfortune on themselves forever, the poor, wretched people! Therefore, no one should be afraid of their blasphemy and defilement. So it must be that they themselves prepare for them the bath in hell, although nature does not like to suffer such heavy blasphemies. But the spirit, judged by this psalm, laughs at them with God and looks to their end.

1) Instead of "sudeln", which the Jena edition offers in the second adaptation, the Weimar edition has: "schudlenn", the Jena edition in the first adaptation: "schüden". The Wittenberg has: "in jn wüten vn endlich verschlingen".

2) Weimarsche: "for the".

V. 16: It is better for the "righteous" to have little than all the hands of many wicked.

This also is grievous in nature, that the wicked are rich, and have much, and are mighty; but the righteous is poor, and alone, or little. Therefore the Holy Spirit comforts his dear child and says: "Do not let it grieve you that you have little and they have much; let them be rich and full here. It is better for you to have a little with God's favor, than to have great heaps of goods, not only of one, but of many and of all the wicked, with God's disfavor, as they have. Hear also what judgment is made of thy poverty and their riches:

V. 17. For the arms of the wicked will be broken, but God contains the righteous.

The arms or hands are the attachment of the wicked, that they hold together a lot, and through this they are great, mighty and strong, just as now the arm of the pope are the kings, princes, bishops, scholars, priests and monks, on whom he relies and therefore does not respect God. So every godless man has the heap, the powerful, on his side; for wealth and power have never been on the side of the righteous, or even a little. But what is the use? Only trust in God! Everything must be broken, you must not be dismayed by it, nor let yourself be annoyed. God contains you, you will not sink, his arm and his hand is over you and has firmly grasped you, over their arms and hand he lets them hold 3) themselves.

V. 18. God knows the days of the innocent, and their inheritance will be forever.

The innocent, in Hebrew Themimim [XXXXX], St. Paul used to call of a sound faith, that is, who do not deal with patchwork in works and laws of men, but have a sincere, firm faith, which teaches them that they need nothing but such faith, whereof they are full of health and riches, and know and judge all 4)

3) So the Jenaer. Wittenberg and Weimar: "itself". If the latter reading should be correct, then instead of: "over" (vber) well "but" would have to be read.

4) Weimarsche: "allen".

Afflictions in all things. God knows their days, their times, their opportunities, that is, because they believe in Him freely and do not want to know when and how to help them, God takes care of them. And even if it seems to the wicked that God has forgotten them, it is not so; God knows when it is their time to help them, as Ps. 9:10 [Vulg.] says: "God is a helper in due time," and Ps. 31:10: "In your hands are my times." As if to say, They are poor and few, those are rich and mighty. But let them go, they will still have enough and suffer no need. God knows well when it is time to help and advise them, whom they also trust, without seeking help and counsel of their own. In this way their inheritance will be eternal, not only in that world, but also in this world. For they shall and must always have enough, though they have not superfluous supplies, as the wicked have; God is their storehouse and granary, wine cellar and all their goods, therefore also follows:

V. 19. They will not stand with shame in the evil time, and in the good time they will have enough.

When war or troubled times come, all those who have placed their comfort in their granary and wine cellar or estate will be disgraced, for it will soon be devoured and destroyed. So they stand in disgrace and with shame, who before were so brave and proud. But the righteous, because God is their comfort and supply, may not be in want; before all the angels come down from heaven and feed them. For they shall not lack the provision in which they trust, neither for time nor for ever. But what about the wicked? Listen:

V. 20 For the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of God, though they be as the pleasant pasture, yet shall they become all, even all, as the smoke.

Ei, that is ever close talked, and contemptuously judged the great, powerful, rich Junker!

He says: Even if they were the richest, most delicious meadow, since enough grows inside, as they are, because they have enough, they are the golden, rich meadow in the world: nevertheless they must perish, yes, perish and all become like the smoke. Where are they who were before and had great good?

None of them is remembered. But the righteous are well remembered and honored.

Therefore, dear child, let them be rich as they wish; look to the end, and you will find how all their things are smoke, because they are God's enemies and do not trust him. Let this also comfort you, that he calls them God's enemies, when until now they have only been called your enemies: that you may know how God takes care of you, that your enemies are his enemies.

V. 21: The wicked borrows and does not pay, but the righteous is merciful and gentle.

But this is a difference of goods, that the goods of the wicked are not only perishable and have an end, but are also evil goods and damnable, because they are gathered only from heaps and are not shared with the poor, which is contrary to the nature of goods. But the righteous man's goods not only have no end, because he trusts in God and waits for his goods from him, but they are also very useful goods that are shared with others and not gathered into a heap. Thus he has enough without all temporal supply, and gives enough to others; that is, a right good. But that he says, "The wicked borroweth," is not to be understood that the rich borrow from men's goods, but it is said in a similitude and proverb: As he that borroweth much and payeth not, striveth not to sit long in the goods: So all the rich and wicked receive much from God, and gather and borrow of him, and yet pay him not, that they may distribute to the poor, wherefore it is given unto them; therefore their goods shall come to an evil end, and be consumed as smoke. That this is the opinion proves that he holds them both against each other, the wicked and the righteous, the one giving and the other not giving, and yet both receiving from God. Therefore is the

1) Wittenbergers and Jenaers: "stand". Weimarsche: "see".

Unholy receiving compares to borrowing and not paying. But the good of the righteous is not borrowing, nor is it debt, but is freely received from God and put to good use, for him and his neighbor.

V.22. For his giving rulers will possess the land, and his giving rulers will be cut off.

Behold, he calls the godless rich: God's reprobates, and the faithful: GOD'S GIVING RIGHTEOUSNESS, lest their great goods and your poverty 1) make you sorry or hinder your faith. What more do you want? If thou hast not superfluous as they have, yet thou shalt have enough and possess the land. Not that thou shalt be a lord of the race, but thou shalt have good enough upon the earth, and shalt dwell in the land with good peace. For God gives you temporally and eternally, so that you may trust in Him, even though you may be destroyed and damaged by the wicked. Again, the ungodly rich, though they have a time to spare, yet shall they perish, and not sit down in the land and estate; they shall surely be cast out, and another set in them, because GOD hath forsaken them, and withheld his grace from them, both for time and for ever; for they believe not in him, though they be forsaken and endowed of men. Therefore, where the righteous are, they have enough on earth and remain in the good. Again, the wicked are rooted out where they sit in goods. This is proved by all the principalities, kingdoms, and great estates, which we see passing to and fro from one generation to another. Behold, thus you have the judgment of temporal goods, which has recently been decided: the righteous must have enough, and the unrighteous must perish, because the righteous trusts in God and has good use of goods; the wicked does not trust, and has no good use of them. Thus we read that Abraham and Lot were rich, and gladly lodged the pilgrims: therefore, though they had no land and store of their own, yet they sat down in the land, and had enough.

1) Thus the Wittenberg, and the Jena in both adaptations. Weimar's: "according to your".

V. 23. This man's walks are directed or encouraged by God, and his way is pleasing.

Behold the consolation! Not only will you have enough good in time, but everything you do, your whole life and way of life, even against the wicked, will be swift and proceed, because you trust God and surrender yourself and your cause to him, being at his disposal in all your life. By doing this, you make him pleased, desirous, and even eager to further your way and walk. For the Hebrew word [XXXX] allhie means not only to have pleasure and to watch, but also to have a fervent desire to create within, so that it is indicated how great God's desire is to promote such a man's way and walk and to create with him, so that we may be willing to trust him, and to command all our things to him, to place them freely at home and to wait for him, to let him do it. But it is against this that such a godly way is not promoted, even prevented and rejected by the wicked; for this upsets nature. Therefore, we must take comfort in the fact that God is pleased and our nature is promoted by Him, not the obstacle and rejection of the wicked.

V. 24. Even if he falls, he will not be thrown away, for God holds him by the hand.

The falling would like to be understood that the righteous sometimes sins, but gets up again, as Solomon [Proverbs 24, 16.] says 2c. But let us leave that now and stay on the course, that "fall" here means as much as if he once succumbed and the wicked succumbed, as David did when he was chased by Saul and Absalom, and Christ did when he was crucified. For such a fall does not last long; God does not leave him lying and cast away, but takes hold of his hand and raises him up again, so that he must stand and remain. With this the Spirit comforts and answers the secret thoughts that someone might have and say to himself, "Yes, I have seen that the righteous man has fallen, and that his cause has been reduced to ashes.

2) Weimarsche: ansehen; Jenaer: angesehm. In the Latin Wittenberg: nullo Uadito respeehtn.

fall before the wicked. Yes, he says, dear child, let that also be. He will fall, but he will not remain lying there and be rejected. He must rise again, even though all the world has despaired of it, for God catches him by the hand and raises him up again.

V. 25. I have been young and grown old, and have never seen the righteous forsaken and his child go after 1) bread.

Behold, he putteth his own experience for more assurance: and it is true, daily experience is, and all men must confess that it is so. But if any man be left to seek for bread, it is certain that his faith is broken, wherefore he is rightly left. But this seeking bread, or "going for bread," must be understood to mean that he will not go hungry or die of hunger, even though he is poor and has nothing before. He will certainly be fed, if he does not have anything else until the next day; if one does not give him, the other will. His food must surely come, even though those who do not give and help him sin. For poor Lazarus, Luc. 16:20 ff, though the rich man gave him nothing, yet he was fed, though it was with poverty. God does not take poverty from His saints, but He does not let them perish or perish.

V. 26. All the days he is merciful, and leans, and his children shall be given.

This is what is said of the righteous man who has, whether or not he has children; if he already gives out, gives and lends daily, he and his children will still have enough. For the promise of giving is that they will have enough here and there, and will have no lack of food for the body and salvation for the soul, even if there is sometimes not enough. So we have how God deals with the faithful in temporal food and their things, that we are sure in both things that He will not leave us, and we will have enough food. And so it will certainly be, if we believe, and do not let the ungodly displease us or move us. Therefore he repeats and concludes again, saying:

1) Weimarsche: "yet".

V. 27. Depart from that which is evil, and do good, and abide only forever.

As if he should say: Let God take care, do only what is good, and let nothing move you to do evil; remain only as you are forever, and let go what goes, as also St. Peter says [1 Petr. 5, 7.], "Cast all your care upon him, for he is the caretaker of us," and Ps. 55:23, "Cast your concern upon God, and he will well provide for you or supply you, and not leave the righteous to be moved forever."

V. 28. For God loves justice and does not abandon His saints; they will be preserved forever, and the children of the wicked will be cut off.

You must not worry that your right will perish, it is not possible; for God has right love, therefore it must be preserved and the righteous must not be abandoned. If he were an idol who loved injustice or was hostile to what is right, like godless men, you would have cause to worry and fear. But now you know that he loves right: What careest thou? what fearest thou? what doubtest thou? Eternally, not only temporally, his saints shall be exalted, and the wicked with child and all theirs shall be cut off. The saints here are not called those who are in heaven, of whom the Scriptures seldom speak, but commonly those who live on earth, who believe in God and through the same faith have the grace of God and the Spirit, from which they are called holy, as we all are, if we truly believe.

V. 29: The righteous shall possess the land, and shall dwell therein for evermore.

That is, as it is said above [v. 26], they have enough on earth, they must not wait anywhere but with God, where they dwell in the world. For God does not leave them, but if He leaves them, they are certainly unrighteous and godless, without faith and trust in God. And so it is decided that we should only do well and remain on the path and in the land, letting Him take care and do His work. Now follows what the cause of the righteous is, so that such a being rises up between them and the wicked.

2) Weimarsche: nu.

V. 30: The mouth of the righteous sheds wisdom, and his tongue speaks what is right.

There is strife over this. The wicked do not want to hear the divine wisdom and right, persecute, condemn and blaspheme it for foolishness and injustice, and the same scoundrels are well off. This, then, vexes and naturally moves the righteous, and they are provoked thereby to evil and revenge 1) or vengeance. Therefore this psalm teaches them to keep still and always continue, always to teach, to do and to speak such wisdom and justice, to let God command the matter, to let those bite, rage, gnash teeth, blaspheme, revile, bare swords, draw bows, pile up and strengthen 2c., as said [v. 14]. For God will do it well, if we only wait and always stay on track and do not stop or slacken for their sake. In the end, the verdict of this verse must remain and be known like the bright noon, that the righteous has spoken rightly and wisely, and the wicked have been fools and unrighteous.

V. 31. The law of God is in his heart, and his footsteps will not slip.

Therefore he speaks rightly and sheds light on wisdom, so that God's law is not in the book, not in the ears, not on the tongue, but in his heart. No one can rightly understand God's law unless it is in his heart to love it and live by it, which is what faith in God does. Therefore, though the wicked speak much of God and His law, though they boast of teachers of the Scriptures and of experienced men, yet they never speak rightly nor wisely, for they have it not in their hearts, therefore they do not understand it; they are deceived by the appearance that they lead the words and the Scriptures, and they rage and persecute the righteous. The footsteps of the righteous do not slip, but walk freely and confidently, because he is sure of his faith, and cannot be deceived by the law and doctrines of men. But the wicked fall and slip back and forth all the time, having no certain footing, because they do not rightly understand God's law apart from faith. And

1) To give again -against payment.

So they go to and fro, as their conceit leads them and teaches men law; now is the work, now this work, now they are taught otherwise, now therefore, and slip where they are led with the nose, one blind man to another. Therefore, as they do not understand rightly, so they do not walk rightly, so they do not teach and speak rightly. Nor do they rage about their slippery doctrine and life against the certain doctrine and life of the righteous, ever wanting to confirm their thing alone.

V. 32: The wicked looketh out for the righteous, and seeketh how he might kill him.

It displeases him and he cannot bear it that his teaching and life are punished as an unjust, unwise being, therefore he thinks no more than how to fortify his cause. Now he cannot stand before the righteous man, who does not let his wrong go unpunished, therefore his false nature drives him to get rid of the righteous man, to kill him, so that his nature remains righteous and unpunished; as the pope and his followers always do and still do, whom we can well see that they do not have God's law in their books, let alone in their hearts. Nor do they want to be the ones who teach wisdom and right, raging and running over it like mad dogs, without stopping.

V. 33. But God does not leave him in his hand, 2) and does not condemn him, whether he is condemned.

God lets the righteous come into their hand, but he does not leave him inside. They may not dampen him, if they kill him at once. Their judgment does not help, even if they boast that they do it in God's stead and in God's name, for God judges the opposite judgment. We see this also in our times. The Pope and his followers have condemned John Hus. No condemnation, no shouting, no blubbing, no raging, no bull, no lead, no seal, no ban will help them; he has always remained and been praised; no bishop, no university, no king, no prince has been able to do anything against him that has never been heard from a heretic. The some

2) Weimarsche: "seyner hend".

3) Weimarsche: "he for".

The dead man, the innocent Abel, 1) makes the living Cain, the Pope, with all his followers heretics, apostates, 2) murderers, blasphemers, should they tear themselves apart and burst. He uses a fine little word here, which serves the cause well, "lo jarschiennu"[XX XXXXXX], non impiabit seu non impium declarabit, that is, whether they judge him a heretic, apostate, rebel, as is now the custom of the papal see and its sects, the papists, God does not respect it, he does not condemn him according to the judgment. How evenly the prophet of the papists meets judgment and sentence in this verse, as if he had only spoken of them! For they cannot cry more than heretic, heretic, heretic, but if they should come on the scene and prove such, they catch the rabbit's foot and hold themselves to the mice's chariot.

V. 34. Wait on God and keep His ways, and He will raise you up to possess the land. When the wicked are cut off, you will see.

But once he exhorts to trust in God and to do good, so that the unruly, 3) stupid nature hardly surrenders and considers God, that it waits for what it neither sees nor feels anywhere, and expresses what it visibly feels. Now it is also sufficiently said how the possession of the land is to be understood, namely, that a righteous man remains 4) and has enough also on earth, in addition, where he has too little temporally, he has all the more spiritually, as Christ teaches and says [Marc. 10, 29. f.]: "Whoever relies on one thing shall see it again a hundredfold in this world, and in addition, eternal life." Although I do not deny that this possession of the earth should be understood, not by any righteous person in particular, but by the multitude and the congregation, although some may be destroyed in time, nevertheless their seed remains above, as the Christians have remained in the world, and the Gentiles have passed away, even though they may be

much of the Gentiles were martyred and destroyed in time, as Ps. 112, 1. f. also says: "Blessed is the man who fears God and is eager in His commandments. His seed shall reign on the earth, and the generation of the righteous shall be multiplied" 2c. But, as I said, over all this each one also has enough for himself, and God also gives him what he may and asks, and, where He does not give it, the righteous is certainly so willing that he does not want it from God, and forbids God not to give it to him; so completely is he one with God that he has and does not have, as he only wants before God, as Ps. 145, 19. says: "God does the will of those who fear Him, and hears their petition and helps them."

That he says here: "You will see when the wicked are cut off", is not said of a bad seeing, but according to the custom of the scripture it means, seeing according to his will, or that he would have liked to see long ago, as we say in German: Das wollte ich gern sehen. In this way Ps. 54, 9. says: "You have delivered me from all evil, and my eyes have seen in my enemies", 5) that is, I have seen my will in them, that I am delivered and they are destroyed. Item, Ps. 112, 8. "The righteous will not be moved until he sees in his enemies." Item, Ps. 91, 8. "Thou shalt see with thine eyes, and the punishment of the wicked shalt thou behold." Again, of the enemies Ps. 35, 21. says: "They have opened their mouth wide, and said, Yea, yea, our eyes have seen", that is, he lies down, it has happened that we would have liked to see long ago. So also Micah [Cap. 4, 1.]: Aspiat in Zion oculus noster, "O that our eye would see in Zion", that is, o that Zion would pass over, that we would gladly see. So here also: You will see what you would have liked to see when the wicked are cut off. This way of speaking is almost mean in the Scriptures.

V. 35. I have seen an ungodly man, who was abominable, and had made himself as a green laurel tree. 6)

But he sets his experience as an example and sign. Above [v. 25.] he has a

5) Thus the Jena. Weimarsche: "ynn meine feynden". 6) Weimarsche: "lorbaum".

1) Compare Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XVIII, 1270.

2) In the editions we have, the comma after "apostate" is missing.

3) serene - devoted, godly.

4) Weimarsche: bleyb.

Experience said of the righteous that he had never seen anyone abandoned. Here he tells an experience of the adversary, of the wicked, how he had passed away, and says: He was rich, powerful, great, that everyone was afraid of him, and what he said, did, left, that was said, done, left, because such a one means the Hebrew little word "Aritz" [XXXX], which I have translated: "abominable".

This also means that he does: he boasted and was noble, he stood out, he was something special in front of everyone, he grew wide and high, just as a laurel tree always grows green in front of other trees and is something special in front of everyone, especially in front of the trees or garden trees, it is also not a bad bush or low tree, which also has to be maintained and cared for, which is not done to the wild trees and cederu. So one must also look and speak to this ungodly squire: Gracious lord, dear lord.

V. 36. I passed by, and behold, he was there; I asked for him, but he was nowhere to be found.

David saw such examples in Saul, Ahithophel, Absalom, and the like, who were fearful in their wickedness. 2) And before they were looked round, they were gone, that they might ask, and say, I will not go. And before one looked around, they were gone, so that one might ask and say: Where have they gone? Is it not true that in our time Pope Julius was also such a man? What an arrogant and dreadful gentleman was he? But did he not disappear before we knew it? Where is he now? Where is his defiance and pomp? So we should just keep quiet. So they will all disappear who now rage and want to destroy heaven and overturn rocks. Let us be silent for a little while and pass by; we will look around and see none of them, if we only trust in God.

V. 37. Only keep yourself innocent and see what is sincere, for the last thing of such a man is peace.

This innocence is laid out above in the 18th verse, let it be a sound faith that is in him

1) That is: tame, cultivated trees. In the original: "tzambewmeu".

2) Weimarsche: "yren".

has enough by itself and has no need of the hospital-like righteousness that helps itself with human laws or works and such beggary. Therefore it is said as much as Paul Titus 2:12: Only be healthy and righteous in simple faith toward God and walk uprightly and honestly; then only see and judge thyself, let the ungodly be ungodly. Behold, then thy last shall be peace, and it shall be well with thee; that is, in dying and after dying it shall be well with thee. The Hebrew language has the way that where I say in German: Es geht ihm wohl, er gehabt sich wohl, es steht wohl um ihn, and in Latin valere, bene habere etc., it means: have peace. So Gen 37:14 Jacob said to his son Joseph, "Go to your brothers in Sichem and see if they are at peace and if the cattle are at peace, and tell me again," that is, if they are well. Hence the greeting in the Gospel [Luc. 24, 36. Joh. 20, 19. 21. 26.] comes in the Hebrew way [XXX XXXX]: Pax vobis, peace be unto you, which we say in German: GOtt gebe euch guten Tag, guten Morgen, guten Abend! Item, in parting we say: Farewell, have a good night, be well! This means vobis. So when the last hour of the righteous and faithful comes, it is well with him, and all his last things are peace.

V. 38. The apostates will be destroyed one by one, and the last of the wicked will be cut off.

This is the contradiction. The righteous remain and prosper, the apostates perish and suffer in their last. "Apostates" here means those who are not sound in the faith, whom the apostle calls "Apostatas" (1 Tim. 4:1), those who fall from the faith to works and laws, as the papists do now. Therefore their last will not stand, it must be unholy, peaceless and be eradicated; because only the healthy, fresh faith stands.

These two verses should also be well understood by both parties, heirs and estates, so that the opinion is: The righteous, what they leave behind, the

3) Weimarsche: "Gang".

and it is well with him, as it is said above in verse 26, that the children of the righteous will also have enough. But all that the wicked leave behind disappears and perishes, as Ps. 109:13 says: "His memory shall be cut off in one member of the family. This is also seen daily in experience.

V. 39. The salvation of the righteous is from God, who is their strength in the time of their distress.

The salvation of the wicked is from themselves, and their strength is their own power. They are great, much, rich and powerful, may not have God's strength and salvation. But the righteous, who must turn away their face from all that is seen and felt, and trust in God alone, have neither salvation nor strength, because from God, who also does not leave them, and does as they believe and trust him, as this following last verse concludes and says:

V. 40. And God will help them and save them; He will deliver them from the wicked and make them blessed, because they have trusted in Him. Behold, behold, what a rich promise, great comfort and superfluous exhortation this is, if only we trust and believe. First of all, God helps them in the midst of the evil, does not leave them alone in it, is with them, strengthens them and sustains them. Moreover, not only does he help them, but he also saves them, so that they come out. For this Hebrew word actually means: to escape from misfortune and to get away. And if the wicked should be displeased, he expresses it by name, saying, "He will deliver them from the wicked," whether they are sorry or not; and if their raging does not help them, though they think that the righteous shall not escape from them, he must be destroyed. Third, not only does he save them, but he also makes them blessed, so that they will no longer come to harm, and all because they have trusted in him. He also says Ps. 91:14-16: "Because he trusts in me, I will save him and protect him, for he knows my name. He has called upon me, therefore I will hear him. I will be with him in his affliction and bring him out of it.

And I will set him in honor, and fill him with the length of days, and shew him my salvation. O of shameful unfaithfulness, disloyalty and damned unbelief, 1) that we do not believe such rich, mighty, comforting promises of God, and so easily fidget in little impulses, if we only hear evil words from the wicked. Help God that we may one day have the right faith, which we see demanded in all the Scriptures. Amen.

This Psalm I have sent to you, dear friends, 2) for your comfort and admonition, according to the teaching of St. Paul Eph. 5, 19. 20. where he says: "You shall speak to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and sounding in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father always, above all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" 2c. Which I do only for the sake of the weaklings; for the strong ones who are among you (by God's grace) I myself would rather listen to and learn from them. Therefore be of good cheer, and abide in the doctrine which ye have heard and still hear. Do not let the wicked frighten you with their raving, for we have so far beaten them, praise God, that they can do no more than rave, and are found to understand nothing at all in Christian matters, and the more and longer they cry, write and rage, the more blind they become and show greater foolishness.

You may notice this in the Lovonians, in the Parisians, in the Romans, also in our neighbors, the Leipzig Sophists. Behold, how foolishly they pretend that a stone would have mercy on them. The other day, one of them 3) told me to cite a saying from Scripture and prove that the people who are commonly called priests are called sacerdotes, priests, in Scripture: if he did that, he should have won; I have defied him, Pope and all papists, and I still defy them. But what does the poor man do? With great raging, blaspheming and shouting, he rages, and proves that he is so utterly

1) Weimarsche: "unglawben".

2) In the original: "frunden"; in Latin: kratres earissilini.

3) Emser. Cf. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XVIII, 1282 ff. De Wette, vol. II, p. 27.

is stone-blind and stone-deaf, that he also does not understand what I ask and what he answers. I ask him for writing, and he answers me with the teacher's sayings. I ask for the sun, he shows me his lantern. I ask: Where is the scripture, he says: Come forth, Ambrosi, come forth, Cyrillus, and the like. Behold, is not this a play of the builders of Babylon [Gen. 11:9], who bring wood when water is called? and yet they cry out as if they had almost hit it. Who can be afraid of such rough heads?

Item, this is even more mocking. Christ says Matth. 5, 13: "You are the salt of the earth"; he also calls this saying, and is supposed to prove with it that they are called priests in the Scriptures. If people are so foolish that salt of the earth means as much to them as "you are priests," what can one do but let them rage and despise? I hope that when he writes more, he will say that the sprinkler and the censer in Scripture are also called priests. All his books are full of foolishness. Therefore do not be afraid, and be of good cheer, for you have the advantage that the pope and his papists know nothing in the Scriptures, nor do they understand their own things. This has been proven enough

First, Sylvester of Rome, after him Johannes Eck, then Rhadinus, then Catharinus, then Cologne and Louvain, then the Pope with his bull, now also Paris and Latomus of Louvain prove it; and finally also the two paper molesters at Leipzig troll. 1) None of them wants the Scriptures. They bring forth the teachings of men and their dreams, and sing their song-dance: Step forward, step forward; but always remain behind.

But if any of them touch you, saying, The interpretation of the fathers must be false, that the scripture is dark; ye shall answer, It is not true. There is no clearer book written on earth than the holy Scriptures, which are to all other books as the sun is to all lights. 2) They speak such things only because they want to lead us away from the

Scripture, and elevate themselves to masters over us, that we should believe their dream sermons.

It is an abominable, great dishonor and vice against the holy Scriptures and all Christianity, if one says that the holy Scriptures are dark, and not so clear that anyone can understand them to teach and prove his faith. Mark this: Should it not be a great shame that I or you should be called a Christian, and not know what I believe? But if I know what I believe, I know what is written in the Scriptures, because the Scriptures contain nothing more than Christ and Christian faith. Therefore, if faith only hears the Scriptures, they are so clear and light to it that it says, "That is right, and I believe it," without all fathers' and teachers' glosses. They would gladly obscure such light and truth from us, and have invented from their minds *fidem implicitam*, *fidem explicitam*, that is, a folded-in and folded-out faith; they say that the common man has the folded-in faith, but they, as our masters, have the folded-out faith, and both are lies. Nor can they indicate an article of folded faith.

For where is it more clearly written that God created heaven and earth, Christ born of Mary, suffered, died, rose again, and all that we believe, but in the Bible? Who has ever been so crude as to read such things and not understand them? The fathers' books and the papists' doctrine are ten times more sinister than what they have said about it without Scripture. It is true that some of the sayings of the Scriptures are dark, but in them there is nothing different from what is in the clear, open sayings. And this is where heretics come from, that they take the dark sayings according to their own understanding, and fight with them against the clear sayings and the foundation of faith. Then the fathers fought against them with the clear sayings, enlightening the dark sayings and proving that what is said in the dark is said in the light. This is also the right study of the Scriptures; so these foolish people make vain new and imaginary articles of faith out of them.

Therefore, when they urge with the fathers, and pretend to believe them, let them

1) Einsler and Alfeld. Cf. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XVIII, 957.
2) Cf. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XVIII, 1293 ff.

keep these two rules. The first: Shall you ask whether the fathers also ever erred? But if they have erred, as they must confess, their sayings are of no account; they must have a higher proof, that is, a clear saying from the Scriptures. If this is not the case, let them go with the fathers. So you may urge them to the Scriptures. This they will do unwillingly; there you will see that they will stand like the pipers who have spoiled the dance. But if they will write, it will be like him who writes, "You are the salt of the earth," [Matt. 5:13] that is, you are priests. 1) Item [Psalm 150:1], "Praise GOD in his saints," that is, the pope has power to raise up saints. 2) For this is the reason that they hold so tightly to the hare's paw, and do not like to hear me, nor do they want to appear or make me appear. They feel well where the shoe pinches them: the quiver is empty, the sword is wooden; the armor is paper and poppy leaves.

The other rule. Shall you say that the fathers do not want anyone to believe them, if they do not lead clear scripture; and the papists do injustice to the dear fathers, that they want to have all their sayings kept. Nor do they seek the honor of the fathers, but their own tyranny, that they may lead us out of the Scriptures, obscure the faith, set themselves above the eggs, and become our idols. This rule is well to be remembered. For thus says St. Augustine lib. 3 Trin. in prologo: I will have such a reader of my books as I am of other books, free and uncaught. Item, Epist. 8, ad Hieronymum: 3) I do not respect that you would have held your books as if they were prophets' or apostles' books; for I believe only the holy Scriptures, that they do not err. I read all the others in such a way that I do not believe that they are true because they have said so, but they prove it to me with bright veracity.

1) Emser in his "Quadruplica". Cf. De Wette, Vol. II, p. 27. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XVIII, 1356 p.

2) Emser in his book: Wider das unchristliche Buch Martini Luters Augustinens, an den deutschen Adel ausgegangen, Verlegung. 152t. (lf. ed.)

3) „^NANKtmiopp. VknstnKtoin. II(1729)Sp. I90f. (exmiolu IXXXII, 3).\" (lf. ed.)

nnnft, or from the holy scripture. Behold, notice that Augustine wants to have Scripture in his own and all other books.

Item, St. Jerome Matth. 23, 4) since he tells many of his ancestors opinions, he gives a verdict, and says: But this has no reason from the Scriptures, therefore it is as easily despised as accepted. Behold! Say whoever says, If he does not bring reason from Scripture, then say, It is as easily despised as accepted. In the same way St. Hilarius lib. 2 Trin. says: This is the best reader, 5) who does not bring his opinion into Scripture, but from Scripture. Item, in another place: It is not fair to teach anything further than the Scriptures give; but he who lacks this certainly does not understand what he teaches, or those who hear him do not understand it. 6) Haec ille. And if they had not already said that 7) St. Paul would be enough, who says of all doctrines [Thess. 5, 21]: "Try everything, what is good, that keep." There he undoubtedly wanted that one does not believe the song dancers who say: Come forward, Cyrille, come forward, Ambrosi, and the like.

Behold, herewith ye may easily publish all the papists' writings, if every one of them wrote an hundred thousand books; for, as I have said, they are all scripture-less, naked, unlearned scribes, who would much better be bath attendants than men of war. Do not let yourselves be led by and out of the Scriptures, however diligently they turn to them. For if you step out of it, you are lost; they will lead you as they please. But if you stay inside, you have won, and you will respect their raging no differently than the rock of the sea respects waves and bulges. It is vain waves and weaving, what they write. Only be sure and without doubt that there is nothing brighter than the sun, that is, the writing. But if a cloud has come in front of it, it is still

4) IliSroiivlni opp. sä. Martiunu^ tom. IV, pars I (Paris 1706) sp. 112. (Weim. ed.)

5) In all editions except the Weimar one: "teacher" instead of: "reader", as it should read according to Hilarius. I>6 Irinitate lid. I e. 18, Opp. eä. Odertdür toin. I p. 18. (Weim. Ausg.)

6) Hilurii opp. e<l.Odertdür torn. I p. 215. 1)6 Irin. lid. VII. e. 38. (Weim. Ausg.)

7) Weimarsche: "des".

There is nothing else behind, but the same bright sun. So, if there is a dark saying in the scripture, do not doubt, there is certainly the same truth behind, which is clear in the other place, and who cannot understand the dark, let him stay with the light.

Hereby I command you to God, and see that you also practice faith among yourselves, and do not let our thing hover in words alone. He who has, let him not leave another; he who has not, let him rely on God, as this Psalm says. I command all of you who present the word of God to you, because they

are worthy of two honors, says St. Paul [1 Tim. 5:17]. Pray also for me, that I may one day become devout. For I must be of you, if I would not love the papists and harm our Lord Christ, that I should care a hair's breadth about it. By the grace of God, I am still as courageous and defiant as I have ever been. I have a small infirmity in my body, but it does no harm. It should bite me where I should be justified. Be of good cheer and fear no one. May the grace of God be with you. Amen.

16. interpretation of the 45th Psalm.*)

Explained in lectures in 1532 and 1533. Issued towards the end of 1533.

ALS retranslated from Latin.

Letter from the printer to the reader.

Behold, dear reader, here we give you Martin Luther's interpretation of the 45th Psalm, which was received by his listeners with the greatest possible care. However, we could hardly obtain it from the author that we were allowed to publish the same under his name, since he found much fault with this extemporaneous explanation, which would have become either more complete or clearer if it had been carefully written down. But because he saw that the meaning was faithfully reproduced everywhere and that the main article of religion was amply treated

He has put up with the fact that there is something lacking in the way he expresses himself. We hope, however, that this work of ours will not be unwelcome to those who are concerned with the holy scriptures, for they will see what the good man had primarily in mind when he taught, and will also be able to judge the writings of others all the more easily, who, although they take great pains to impose their books on the whole world, make no mention of those things which are the most important articles of religion. Farewell and enjoy our work.

*) A single edition of this writing appeared under the title: Praelectio D. Martini Lutheri in Psalmum XLV. Wittebergae. M.D.XXXIII. At the end: Imprint D. Martini Lutheri in Psalmum XLV. Wittebergae. M.D.XXXIII. 9lm @nbe: Imprint Wittebergae per Johannem Lufft. Anno XXXIII From the printer's letter to the reader we see that Luther only reluctantly agreed to the publication of this writing, which had been picked up by his listeners. It was translated into German by D. Georg Major and accompanied by a letter to the Electress Sybilla of Saxony, dated "an St. Jakobstage Anno 1537". The title is: "The XI,V Psalm by D. Marti. Luther in Latin language interpreted, and now and Germanized by Georg. Maior. Wittemberg M.l>.XXXVII." On the penultimate page: "Gedruckt zu Wittemberg durch Hans Lufft. LI.V.XXXVII." In the introduction to the 4th volume, p. 27, Walch notes that an edition had already appeared earlier, in 1535, "with the inscription: der XI,V Psalm in lateinischer Sprache ausgelegt und verdeutscht durch Georg Maior." Perhaps the inscription was added to the edition of 1537. In this translation by Maior there are several omissions, namely the exhortation to diligently study the Hebrew language and the explanation of the Hebrew title. In the Latin collective editions, this interpretation is found: in the Wittenberg (1549), tom. III, fol. 469; in the Jena (1603), tom. III, fol. 4431" and in the Erlangen, 6X6Z. opp-, tc "m. XVIII, p. 128. According to Major's translation: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. III, p. 489d; in the Altenburg, vol. VI, p. 373 and in the Leipzig, vol. VI, p. 107. In 1737, Benjamin Lindner, Superintendent at Salfeld, had the translation reprinted under the title: "Des Mannes Gottes, Martini Lutheri, geistreiche Auslegung des herrlichen Brautliedes von Christo und seiner Kirche, des 45. Psalms Davids" 2c. We have retranslated according to the Erlanger.

Lecture D. Martin Luther on the 45th Psalm,

started in 1532.

As I have already said before, I have decided to select a few Psalms for the interpretation, because my work is too uncertain due to my state of health and my business to be able to explain the whole Psalter in order or even another whole book. Therefore, after the 51st Psalm, Miserere, which taught about the right way of repentance, faith and justification, let us teach and hear something cheerful. Therefore, I have taken the 45th Psalm, Eructavit, before me, in which we will see how rich a speaker the Holy Spirit is, who can present and illustrate one and the same thing in many different ways with words. For the subject of which he speaks (materia) is everywhere the same, and he does not teach something different, but he always adorns and clothes the same thing, namely faith and the doctrine of justification, with other adornment and other garments, so that the excuse can have no place, as if God had not at all times and in all places abundantly instructed, instructed and admonished us to righteousness and truth.

But here you can see our laziness. For we are such lazy disciples that, having once heard the doctrine of godliness, we think we have absorbed the whole Holy Spirit at once, and soon, weary, throw the book out of our hands, and meanwhile follow carnal advantage and gain. But it should be quite different. Since we see that the Holy Spirit is not weighed down by the fact that he often holds the same thing before us and presents it to us, we should not be annoyed by the effort that is spent on learning this, especially since the words of the Holy Spirit are such that one can never learn them sufficiently. Therefore, we will have to give an even heavier account for this sloth or idleness on the day of judgment, since the Holy Spirit will reproach us for having taught us the doctrine of faith so diligently in all the

I have prescribed and painted all possible colors, so that the herbs and flowers do not have such a great variety as is found in the holy scriptures. For such a great variety of Scripture, which teaches and inculcates one and the same thing, he has presented to us everywhere for the sake that he might keep us in the zeal of learning and awaken us against the weariness from which we otherwise suffer.

Furthermore, this psalm is extraordinarily sweet and full of the most joyful flowery words of the bridegroom and the bride. For the idea of the wedding, which is sweet and joyful, runs through the whole psalm, so that it covers the cross and the outward appearance of the church. On the other hand, other psalms are, in appearance, frightening and sad; but if you look at them more carefully, you will find that they are exceedingly joyful and full of consolation, as the previous psalm Miserere [Ps. 51] was, which was about repentance and the forgiveness of sins, about the sacrifice to God, about the service of God, which is extraordinarily powerful to comfort the sorrowful hearts. Here you see the opposite. For the words are sweet and joyful and quite nuptial. Here you hear and see nothing but citherns, flutes, dances, wreaths, flowers, beautiful clothes, and other things that are exceedingly lovely to see and hear; and yet, if you look at the Spirit, there is taught cross and persecution, then also sorrow of heart, and all the things that we heard in the previous psalm, which is sighing and sorrowful. In this way the Holy Spirit arranges everything, so that we, whether we are going in or going out, may find exceedingly joyful pasture, with which he refreshes and comforts us against the various dangers and adversities by which we are beset all around. This is what I wanted to say in a few words about the way of speaking, so that a carnal Jew does not creep in and take this from carnal and worldly joy. Now we also want to talk a little about the title.

V. 1. a bridal song and instruction of the children of Korah, from the roses, to sing. **(In finem pro his, qui commutabuntur etc..)**

The Hebrews use the word in various ways, and no one, whether he be a Greek or a Latin, let it enter his mind that he understands it. Therefore, I have often exhorted that you learn the Hebrew language and not neglect it so. For even if one had no other use for this language, one should still learn it out of gratitude, because it is a part of religion and worship that one teaches or learns the language that alone teaches what divine things there are. For in it one hears God speak, in it one hears the saints invoke [God] and do the greatest deeds, so that the study that is spent on learning this language could rightly be called a kind of mass or worship. Therefore I earnestly exhort you not to neglect it. For one must be concerned that God, offended by this ingratitude, will deprive us not only of the knowledge of this sacred language, but also of Greek and Latin and the whole religion. For how easy it is for Him to awaken some crude (*barbarum*) people, so that these languages all perish with one another! But besides the fact that this study is a part of worship, it also brings the greatest benefit. For if someone wants to become a theologian, as it must be that some become theologians, since not all can study law or medicine, he must be well fortified against Pabstism and the whole swarm of hateful people, who soon think that they are masters of this holy language, when they have learned to pronounce only one Hebrew word. If we do not know this language, they will mock and ridicule us as if we were donkeys. But if we are also fortified in the knowledge of this language, we can shut their insolent mouths. For this is how we must resist the devil and his servants. I believe, however, that we will have the Spanish, the French, the Italians and also the Turks

I am sure that the knowledge of the Hebrew language will be necessary. For I know how much it has been of use to me against my enemies. Therefore, I would not want to lose this knowledge of mine, however small it may be, for so many (*infinitis*) thousand guilders, and you, too, who will one day be teachers of religion, must take care that you learn this language, if you do not want to be taken for stupid cattle (*pecora campi*) and unlearned rabble, who teach the Sunday gospels and the catechism to some extent by means of the books published in German. But there are also some leaders in the doctrine necessary, and one must have fighters who stand in the battle line against the people of other nations and languages, who are (*sint*) teachers, judges and masters in this language. But I return to the title.

Now one translates the word by *ad victoriam*, another: *ad effundendum sanguinem*. The Latin interpreter and the Septuagint have given it by *in finem*. However, although we too are uncertain of our opinion, we rightly reject all of the above translations, according to what can be gathered from comparison with other scriptural passages. For how is "conquer" or "shed blood" appropriate here? This word means in the books of Chronicles, Ezra and Habakkuk: to stand in front of, to urge on, to stop, so that it can mean: "to sing in front of" and the one who urges others that they either sing together or answer singing, as in our churches one can call a precentor who sings something on the choir, to which the laity answer: Amen, as the masses and other things are used to be sung. So Paul commands 1 Cor. 14, 27. 16. that one should interpret, the others should say "Amen".

I now take this title to indicate that this Psalm should be sung in such a way that it should be sung by the principal singers or the Levites, just as in the cathedral churches the Epistle and the Gospel are not read by the disciples, 2) but by the ministers of the Word.

1) Cf. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. X, 222, § 4.

This is my opinion; even if I am mistaken, this error is nevertheless more unfortunate than that one translates: "To victory", as if they had had a competition with each other in shouting, as Lyra fools. What is the use of such a useless thing in the Scriptures? Much more appropriately, therefore, it is referred to the public order of which they made use in the temple, so that, as Paul exhorts [1 Cor. 14:40.], everything might be done in order. For what a confusion it would be if all wanted either to read or to preach the gospel! Therefore the order is made, that one rises to the pulpit, after which the whole congregation prays. After that, he recites the gospel and interprets it. When the sermon is finished, they pray again. This fine and paffing order serves to avoid disorder that would result if every single person wanted to perform all the offices. Therefore, the title reminds us that the psalm is for those who are to sing, so that the leader of the singing is the one we call "the bandmaster", who begins and leads the singing.

Other psalms have the superscription because they were sung within the boundaries of those who were not in public office, as with us the sacred Christian faith (symbolum) is sung by the whole people. Others have their name from the steps, because they were sung from elevated steps. 1) For in the churches there must be different customs. Those who have the Hebrew language may have better thoughts than these. But I know that my opinion is better than that of Lyra or a Jew or other superstitious interpreters.

A bridal song (**canticum pro dilecto**).

A song of friends or lovers 2) Wedding poem, as we have given it in German: "ein Brautlied". But it serves to indicate the content of the psalm. For it is about a royal bridegroom and a royal bride, likewise about the women's room. Therefore we can

1) The Step Psalms or Songs in the Higher Choir. Compare Luther's interpretation of the fifteen songs in the higher choir, Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. IV, Col. 1751.

2) We have deleted the comma after alnantiuin.

call this psalm a bridal song, since the king with his bride, and the wedding festivities, the banquets, the round dance 2c. are described. So this little piece contains the content that he will sing a lovely and joyful bridal song, but in the spirit.

The children Korah.

These are the authors of the song. Because in Moses [4 Mos. 26, 11. The rabbis write that when the earth opened and Korah was swallowed up with the rest of the people, his children stood above the cleft by a miracle suspended in the air, because they did not want to leave the tabernacle, but admonished their father with his followers to desist from his error. Therefore, they are highly praised in the books of Chronicles [1 Chron. 10, 19. 1, and the psalms they composed 3) are exceedingly joyful and lovely, and truly bridal songs, so that I believe the descendants of Korah were especially chosen for worship, so that there would also be poets for worship among the people of God, who would sing and compose songs to the praise and honor of God. Thus Ethan and Jeduthun are praised along with many others. But the children of Korah sang the most about Christ before others, but in a different way than David, under the image of the wedding. It is clear that they were good and godly children who believed in God and not in the foolishness of their parents; therefore they were preserved to the praise of God. They were not priests, but Levites; in this state they remained, and did not seek the priesthood, as their father did.

From the roses (**super lilia**).

XXXX means a rose; hence Susanna, Rosina or the Rosy. 4) Here one must use the

3) The Psalms of the children of Korah are: Ps. 42. 44-49. 84. 85. 87. 88.

4) The Wittenbergers and the Jenaers offer here: inäs Knsanna, rosina vet rosaooa. In contrast, the Erlangen quite incomprehensible: "incio MVV rosina voi rosaooa." The old translator is correct: "from this comes Susanna, whom we call Rosina."

It is the custom of the Hebrews to name precious things, even kingdoms, with the names of flowers and precious stones. Thus, even today, the Jews give their daughters the names of precious stones or flowers. Hence Susanna and Margarita 2c., for they have the custom of naming what they hold dear roses, little flowers, violets 2c. So they also name their books with the names of flowers or other glorious things, as, the door of the nut 2c. Thus Assaph calls the whole kingdom a rose in the 80th Psalm, v. 1. We have given it in German: "Von den Spanrossen", because, just as the princes wear precious jewels adorned with precious stones, so the people of the Jews is the special people, which God carries in His bosom [Is. 40, 11.], as a special ornament; which is adorned with the worldly regiment and the service of God, which God Himself has instituted; and God wants to guard and protect this people. Therefore, He calls it a gem of GOD and a rose of GOD. The holy men also recognized this and praised this gift of the kingdom and the priesthood, which God had instituted, and knew to make a distinction between the works of God and human works, between the creature and its infirmities, that even though the people were wicked and the rulers ungodly, it was nevertheless in truth a precious stone and a rose, because the institution of God was there. But when they consider beyond the worldly government also the church and the service of God, they call the same violets, precious stones, emeralds 2c., as they called the twelve tribes twelve precious stones [Ex. 28:17-21.], that Judah should be the emerald of GOD; and so they said also of the rest.

In this way, he also calls the bridal song a rose here. For thus the words are set: A song of the children of Korah about (super) roses or of (de) the roses. For the Hebrews have not the preposition "of" (de), but make use of the letter X or XX, as it is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Cap. 1, 7. Vulg.): ad angelos. There it is written *προς τους αγγελους* according to the Hebrew manner, instead of: *περί των ἀγγέλων* ["of the angels"]. Likewise Cap.

4, 13. (Vulg.): ad quem nobis sermo, while it should read: de quo nos dicimus ("from which

we talk"]. So it is also here: "of the roses". But here he does not call the secular government a rose, which is also a rose, but he speaks of the church and of future roses and of other twelve tribes than those that were then, yes, he speaks of all the tribes of the earth, and of the church that is spread over the whole world, and of the bridegroom Christ. Therefore, he uses the plural to indicate that he is not speaking of just one people, but of all the churches gathered together in one faith.

An instruction

With this closer definition (epitheto) he draws the listener's attention. But the word XXXXX 1 Sam. 18, 13. denotes a man who is active and busy, to whom everything goes out well, and who attacks everything rightly, "wise and prudent, to whom it comes off quickly", and this is the worldly (politica) meaning of this word. For in the secular government this virtue is absolutely necessary, that those who govern the communities be lively and quick, not sleepy, but active, as Emmerich of Görlitz 1) was in our time, and many others who seriously care for the community and take care of the government with great zeal. For the sleepy and indolent, besides neglecting their office, lose reverence and fear. But in the Psalms this word has another meaning, namely a theological one. For it denotes a spiritual prudence, as in the 2nd Psalm, v. 10: "Be ye therefore wise, ye kings" (Nunc reges intelligite = Be wise, ye kings). For that he commands the kings to be wise indicates that he goes higher than the laws and natural reason and all that consists in the natural prudence of law. For of these things teach the philosophers and the lawyers, who have drawn the laws from natural reason, whose object is that one may live honorably and guard against injustice; hence come the arts of peace and war. Now those who are like this in kingdoms, who are governed by laws and right

1) In the Erlangen edition, which we have followed: Linmorious Oortioonsis; instead in the Wittenberg and the Jena: "N."

45th Psalm: Ps. 45, 1-2: W.V., 477-479.

He says that they should be wise and be instructed. And he names the highest rank among men, namely the kings and the judges of the earth, as if he wanted to say: Ye that have laws now, and that compose kingdoms with laws, which are the most learned men: send ye your hearts to receive instruction, and incline your ears hither. You will hear a new teaching that far surpasses your worldly (politicam) wisdom.

In this way, he calls the Psalm a song of instruction (as the 32nd Psalm is also called), written for the sake of making people wise in spiritual wisdom, which is higher than reason and worldly wisdom, that it may teach of a new and spiritual kingdom, of a new king, of new righteousness, of new government of the kingdom and of the people, of which one has not heard before. Therefore, one must pay attention and open one's ears to hear the teaching, which is only grasped in faith. So it denotes a poem by which he teaches spiritual attention and awakens faith; without this faith and spiritual attention, no one can become proficient in the Scriptures. For this wisdom is not obtained by laws or by reason, for it is contained in the Word, which can only be grasped by simple faith; otherwise one will never understand anything of it. For the things it teaches are incomprehensible and invisible. Since you want to hear this psalm, you must think that you will hear an instructive song, which is made to teach us about things that go beyond human comprehension, about the comprehension of kings, princes, philosophers, priests. This I have said a little more fully of the word XXXXX; now compare the passages of the Bible, and you will find that when they speak of the kingdom of the church, they use it of judgments and heedings, that they may remind the reader that it is a more excellent doctrine than that which flows from human reason; that they may awaken the diligence of the hearers, lest they think that such great things can be learned in sleep, but that it is the supreme care of the church to be learned in sleep.

Theology requires a great deal of diligence. For if in the world regiment and other arts nothing is accomplished without diligence, this happens even less in theology. The title therefore calls the reader's attention here. Now let us go to the Psalm.

V. 2 My heart sings a beautiful song; I will sing of a king.

He begins by earning the goodwill of the readers. For he indicates that he wants to speak of by far the most pleasant and best and most beautiful thing on earth, not some ordinary song of a craftsman, or of a warrior, but of the highest sovereign person, of a king (for the person of the king is the highest in the world), and of a peaceable king, and that in fine, chosen speech and with the sweetest words.

But here we must again bear in mind what we have said above, that this psalm moves entirely in secret interpretation, and that under the flowery words "king" and "kingdom" a spiritual kingdom and the church are understood, so that all this, which is in the worldly kingdom before the senses and before the eyes, must be done away with and referred to the invisible, where everything happens quite contrary to the kingdoms of the world. For if one looks at the outward appearance of this kingdom, everything is opposite. Where life is preached in this spiritual kingdom, there is death in appearance; where honor is preached, there is the shame of the cross; where wisdom is preached, there is foolishness; where strength and victory are preached, there is weakness and the cross, and so also in other things, so that you must understand everything you will hear here about the kingdom of Christ according to the article: "I believe a holy church." Whoever says, "I believe," does not see that the thing is so, but sees the opposite.

Therefore, this is the entrance of the Psalm, that he indicates that he wants to speak of a king and a kingdom, and not of a king and kingdom as such, but of a very good, pleasant and lovely kingdom, in which there is no servitude, no poverty, no danger, but eternal dominion.

He wants to say of such a kingdom that nothing in the kingdom of the world is equal to it except in a faint shadow and a small image. Of such a kingdom he wants to say that nothing in the kingdom of the world is like it, except in a weak shadow and a low image (*figuram*). For the kings and princes of the world have the appearance of being merry, because they are exquisitely dressed and go about with great pomp. This appearance of the kings of the world is outward, but inwardly they are full of all misfortunes, sorrows and troubles. This kingdom, however, although it is miserable on the outside, is on the inside the highest good and the highest victory, the highest joy, at the description of which my heart overflows. In such a way he has the contrast in mind. What the Latin interpreter translates: *Dicam opera mea regi*, of which the opinion is: "I will sing of a king."

My tongue is a stylus of a good writer.

I am a scribe, I am not a prophet; I would not arrogate to myself such an exalted status. The scribes were not legal scholars, but theologians who interpreted the holy scriptures, as the doctors of theology do today. He says: I do not want to sing of a servitude or a fleshly kingdom, but of a spiritual, very lovely one. But this is the kingdom which we also preach, namely the gospel of peace and faith, which teaches of righteousness in the Holy Spirit. So Moses could not sing, who is a servant of the prison, a teacher of forced labor (*pistrini*) and an author of servitude, and, as Paul is wont to call him, a servant of death, sin and sorrow. Against these we want to sing of the lovely, free and joyful kingdom.

For he looks on Moses by the way, because he calls his tongue the stylus of a good (*velocis*) scribe. For Moses' tongue was the stylus of a ponderous (*impediti*) scribe.

Moses also confessed [Ex. 4:10] that he had a heavy tongue. Therefore his brother had to take his place in speaking, but Moses did the miracles; Aaron spoke. This was an example that the kingdom of the law should not be a sweet one. He alludes to this and says: "Moses was not eloquent, but had a heavy tongue and heavy hands; therefore he could not sing well, but was a slow and ponderous scribe. But I have a joyful spirit and a glad heart, and teach not the tyranny of the law and of sin, but lovely promises and the cheerful doctrines of peace and safety of conscience. So you see that everything goes in spiritual interpretation; therefore, one must make the contrast between Moses or the Law and the Gospel throughout the Psalm, then the Psalm becomes quite clear.

V. 3. You are the most beautiful among the children of men.

The prophet proceeds in the description of the king in good order and in different ways, and treats almost ten main pieces (*locos communes*); therefore, we also want to begin to divide the psalm here. But you know that for a kingdom in the flesh, first of all, a person is required who is worthy of the kingdom. For a king is the head of the kingdom. But as the head must give and supply motion and sensation to the body, and if the head is suffering, the whole body is weak and suffers, so also, if the prince is not fit to rule the kingdom, the principality will be badly administered. Therefore, we see in the histories that sluggish, foolish and foolish princes have ruined peace, prosperity, even entire empires. Therefore, the first gift is to have a king who is fit for this kingdom. Therefore, the prophet begins with this main part, and describes the king himself in his own person, saying: I will write about such a king, who is beautiful. The Hebrew word XXX 2) has been doubled; but it means

2) According to what the Wittenberg and the Jena editions offer: will be read thus; not N2', which is

which Erlanger has. But it is IV2'2' kMI of N2'.

1) We find the reading of the Jenaer followed: *summum douum et summa vietoria, summa laetitia*, in <juo äeserideuão etc. The Wittenberg reads likewise, except that *summa* is missing before *laetitia*. The Erlanger offers: *summum vouum, et summum in yuo ckseribeuUo* etc.

beautiful and handsome in form. But he wants to say: You are exceedingly beautiful, yes, only you are beautiful before all the children of men. Furthermore, he does not speak of the natural or essential (metaphysica) beauty of the body, although I believe that Christ was also naturally beautiful and had a right and proper proportion of the limbs. But we do not concern ourselves with these here, but pass on to the spiritual beauty, and deal with the king in a spiritual way.

Now the first form and beauty is this, that Christ is true God and true man, not defiled and shameful like the rest of us, who are all born in original sin and ruined (lacerati) by God's wrath, because no man is without sin; but all of us are born without righteousness and wisdom, and live and die that way also, if Christ does not come to our aid; and the wiser and greater the kings are, the more shameful they are before God. First of all, we take the form of the essence (substantia) of Christ in a spiritual way, that Christ is pure and holy, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, so that he would be without all stain of sin, "full of grace and truth", Jn. 1, 14, in all things holy in spirit and flesh, so that one hair, one drop of Christ is purer than the sun.

It is possible that someone was as beautiful in body as Lucas [Apost. 6, 15.] writes of Stephen that his face shone like the face of an angel; perhaps it is possible that some were more beautiful than Christ, for we do not read that the Jews particularly admired his form; but we are not dealing here with the natural and essential (metaphysica) form, but with the spiritual form. This is such that he is the most beautiful of all the children of men, so that he alone remains beautifully formed and beautiful, all others being shapeless, ugly, disfigured by evil will, by weakness in resisting sins and the other infirmities that naturally cling to us. This ugly figure of men does not appear before the eyes, nor does it make an impression on the eyes, just as spiritual beauty does not

is perceived with eyes; for because we are flesh and blood, we are moved only by the bodily (metaphysica) form and beauty that the eyes see. But if we had spiritual eyes, we would see how great an ugliness it would be that the will of man has turned away from God, that he blasphemes God, that he seeks the honor of the Godhead and majesty, that he is full of contempt and hatred of God and neighbor, full of evil desire, pride, avarice 2c. These are the shameful figures of ugliness, of which also the pagans could judge to some extent. Therefore they said that righteousness was more beautiful than the evening star or the morning star.

This is the first sweetness and exceedingly great pleasantness of this song, in which he sings of such a kingdom and promises that in it there shall be such a king, in whom shall be no infirmity, but the will full of virtues, and the mind full of wisdom, with burning love toward all wretched and damned and afflicted sinners. Moses is not such a king, but he is a tormentor and a cruel executioner and torturer, who torments and tortures us with his terrors, threats and examples of wrath, who forces us to do good outwardly, or, when he does his best, humbles us inwardly, so that we groan for mercy. Our king, however, who is sung about here, is full of mercy, grace and truth; in him there is love for mankind and the greatest compassion; he does not shout in the streets, as it is said in Isaiah [Cap. 42, 2]; he is not severe and sharp, but patient and long-suffering; he exercises judgment against the wicked and blasphemers and proves and shows his mercy to sinners. Therefore, he is the most lovely and beautiful king, who has no equal in the world; in him is the highest virtue and the highest love toward God and man.

With this adornment this person is adorned, that there is nothing of pride, lust, evil desire or any other evil movements in him, as we see that he is also described as such in the Gospels, and the facts themselves indicate that he was so constituted. He does not associate himself with holy, powerful and wise people but

To the rejected and wretched sinners, to those who are in misfortune, to those who are burdened with serious and incurable diseases: 1) these he heals, comforts them, raises them up, helps them. Finally, he even dies for sinners. He does not frighten, he does not kill, as Moses does, but he attracts, he makes happy, he comforts, he heals, he helps all who come to him. He is therefore the King of kings, who has no equal, but only if you look at the spirit and not at the outward appearance of the flesh. This is the one part of the description of the person, which is only indicated in short words; the holy evangelists describe it more abundantly and delete it, and St. Paul in his epistles. He paints this king with his proper colors, as he is according to his person, and this is exceedingly useful to those who are in distress and temptation of conscience.

But when the world hears the praise of this king, it does not suffer this sermon, but says the opposite, namely, that one has never heard or seen anything more shameful than this king. Therefore the world cannot bear to see him, as we see in the Pharisees and priests, who were inflamed with such great hatred against Christ that they could not even look at him, although when he was with them and spoke, out of his mouth came rays, even suns of wisdom, and from his hands rays of divine power, and from his whole body suns of love and all virtues. But all that he showed them of his beauty was a disgust and abomination to them, not through Christ's fault, but through their own. For in like manner as a blind man walking in the sunshine is not refreshed by the light of the sun, so they cared not for the present Christ. For this is the way and nature of the world, that it judges this king to be the most shameful of all the children of men, and considers his most beautiful gifts and virtues to be devilish mischievousness and wickedness. We experience the same today.

Therefore I have said that this king is hidden under the opposite form. For in spirit he is more beautiful than all the children of men, but in the flesh all the children of men are more beautiful, and only this king is ugly, as he is described in Isaiah Cap. 53, 2. 3: "He had no form nor beauty; we saw him, but there was no form to please us. He was the most despised and unworthy, full of pain and sickness. He was so despised that people hid their faces from him." We see, therefore, that in this psalm pleasant and lovely things are preached by this King, but they are wrapped up and covered by the outward figure of the cross. The world does not have these gifts, nor does it admire them, but persecutes them because it does not believe; but to us they are announced, so that we may know that we have such a King.

We therefore confess and teach that all men are condemned, that their beauty is nothing before God, that their righteousness is sin, that their strength is also nothing, but everything we do, think and speak of ourselves is reprehensible and worthy of eternal death; but that we must base ourselves on the form of this King, that he must be preferred to all, that in his power all dangers and evils must be overcome.

Now to those who believe this, this psalm is spoken so that they may learn it and sing it, and it is written for their use and comfort. The Jews once sang it in the temple, the monks and the whole papacy sang it and still sing it today, but they have kept, done and taught the opposite, therefore they have not been worthy to taste a drop of the true meaning. Therefore, the sum of this first part is that the children of men are nothing against this king, but that everything they have in wisdom, righteousness and other virtues is nothing against his wisdom, righteousness and virtues. Now let us continue.

Secondly, wisdom is required above all things for the person of the king, because a king, however beautiful he may be, is nothing if he is not wise, as the proverb

1) In the Erlanger, a comma is erroneously placed after oppr688is.

says: Either a king or a fool must be born. For a king who is beautiful, yet a fool, is like a gilded nut that has nothing but the outward appearance, or like a daintily painted vessel that is full of filth; indeed, the beautiful form is all the more repulsive if there is no understanding. Therefore, this king is without all false appearance (hypocrisi), full of hold, and the wisest among the children of men, yes, only wise, and Moses is nothing against him. For this is what this word says:

Your lips are blissful.

This is the noblest cause to praise kings, even in the kingdom of the world, if one can praise their wisdom. For so men have said, instructed by experience, that things are better accomplished by wisdom and counsel than by strength and weapons; nay, that strength and weapons even do harm if they are not supported by good counsel. For if we look at ourselves, what are we men compared to lions, bears and horses? If a horse knew how to use its strength, it would throw a hundred men to the ground. So would a tame pig, if it wanted to use its powers or knew how to use them, kill ten butchers. Yes, even the inanimate things are far stronger than man, as, wood, bricks 2c. If a thnrm collapsed, it would kill a great multitude of men; for these things are stronger than men. But because man has reason, he governs all these things, and we see that four-year-old children drive draught animals. Thus the tremendous strength of the unreasonable animals is governed by a weaker force and, as it were, captured. That is why the Romans also said that wisdom and counsel would direct things, not luck; likewise that the crowd would not help to win if there was a lack of counsel. And if foolish behavior is added to this, the great multitude is only brought to be murdered; for this they have people like Flaminius, Varro and Minutius and many others as witnesses. Wisdom is therefore the

first virtue and gift required in a king. Therefore Moses, Deut. 4, 6, says that the heathen will be astonished at this one virtue: "Oh, what wise and understanding people they are, and a glorious nation!" And Solomon is praised in the Scriptures not so much for his riches as for his wisdom. For this is the highest praise.

Thus also here, after the person and its completely perfect beauty is described, wisdom of exactly the same kind is required, as that of its form was. But this is the blessed wisdom that was poured out upon his lips, and it seems that Lucas Cap. 4, 20. has looked at this passage, since he says that when Christ taught, all eyes were upon him because of the blessed words (*verbum gratiae* [v. 22.]) which procured him the goodwill of the hearers, and he says: "they marveled" at his teaching. But here he is also stabbing at Moses, who also had lips, but clumsy, unspoken, heavy, angry ones, on which were not words of love, but words of wrath, death and sin. But if you take all the wisdom of Moses, of the pagans, of the philosophers, you will find that in the sight of God it is either idolatry, or hypocritical wisdom, or, if it concerns worldly government, wisdom of wrath. Therefore, as the beauty of this King of Christ alone is a beauty, so his wisdom alone is a wisdom, for it is a wisdom of grace (*gratiae*), that is, of promises, and his word is sweet, full of comfort and confidence. Thus the poet here has diligently read the prophecies and promises of Christ, and has seen that his lips are the very sweetest and loveliest, drawing to themselves the hearts of all who are weak.

Therefore, Christ must not be painted as having gall or a sword in his mouth, as he is painted everywhere, 1) unless it is understood spiritually; but he must be painted in such a way that his lips er-

1) Cf. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. VII, 913 f. For the words that follow: "unless it is understood spiritually," see Walch, old edition, vol.

seem as nothing but sugar and honey. Whoever paints this mouth differently is mistaken, and one must rather listen to this poet than to the papists and Satan, the authors of this frightening painting. For the latter will not deceive us, since he ascribes to Christ the most blessed mouth. This must be well observed. For Christ shall not grieve hearts by his word, he shall not terrify; and every one that terrifieth and torments consciences under Christ's name is not Christ's messenger, but the devil's. For Christ's name is [Isa. 42:3, 2.], "The bruised reed he will not break, and the smoldering wick he will not quench." He is gentle: "He will not cry out nor shout, and his voice will not be heard in the streets." He is not harsh, stern and biting like Moses, "who sees like the devil, and speaks so that one's heart would disappear at it." For he has lips that are doused with gall and wrath, "that are pierced with the neck of the cellar and with gall, even with hellish fire. Therefore always away with Moses". But our King has sweet lips, that is, his word is the word of forgiveness of sins, of comfort for the humble, a word of life and blessedness to restore the damned and dying.

And he does not call them simply gratuitous lips, but lips overflowing with gratitude (*diffusa gratia*), to indicate that Christ is exceedingly rich in his lips, from whose mouth, as from an abundantly flowing fountain, come the most delicious promises and teachings, with which he directs and comforts souls. What you therefore hear daily of this Christ, this poet paints, as you see, though briefly, yet with splendid and highly poetic words: "Happiness is on the lips of this king, and not only that, but poured out, so that one should understand that this fountain of grace flows abundantly and bubbles over, as if he wanted to say: Our king has such wisdom as no man has, that is, the sweetest and most lovely wisdom, because he takes care of the brokenhearted, comforts the afflicted, restores the despairing, restores the fallen and the humiliated, restores the sinner, and restores the poor.

who justifies, makes the dying alive, and everything else that the word of salvation accomplishes, he does in abundance. Therefore, it is a sweet and pleasant wisdom that is worthy of such great praise. Therefore he says in Isaiah Cap. 50, 4: "The Lord hath given me a learned tongue," the Lord hath given me an eloquent tongue, "that I may know how to speak with the weary in season."

And take careful heed lest the tongue of Christ be one that scareth or hurteth, except when he speaketh unto the worthy and hard. To whom he says [Matt. 11:21], "Woe to you, Chorazin; woe to you, Bethsaida!" 2c. There he does a strange work, as is said in Isaiah [Cap. 28, 21.]. But the Psalm speaks here of his own ministry and work, which he performs against his own, not of a foreign one, and he does not speak to the hard and hopeful, but to those who are afflicted outwardly by the tyranny of the world, and inwardly by Moses and the word of the law, likewise by the wiles of the devil, by the weakness of conscience, by sad thoughts 2c. Those who believe in Christ, who have these temptations, he speaks to them and promises them such a king, who is the most wise, and has such a word and wisdom, wherewith he can heal their ills; and he gives them the promise: Be of good cheer, be confident in this king, who does not hate you or want to punish you, but is favorable to you and promises you eternal life, because he has lips that are exceedingly sweet and overflowing with happiness.

Therefore, the godly should be mindful of this, that they hold this against the sharp, harsh and frightening lips of Moses, as well as against the accusations of the devil in the heart and the tyrants who persecute them, and in short, against all the things that make the hearts of the godly sad. To these they should oppose their King with His exceedingly sweet promises, which we read here and there in the Gospel [John 16:33]: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." [Joh. 14, 1. 2. § "Do not let your heart be troubled. If you believe in God, you also believe in me. In

My Father's house is full of dwellings" 2c. These are the sweet lips, overflowing with sweetness, but no one understands them, unless he is troubled and afflicted in his conscience and has learned to comfort himself with these promises. Raw people and those who have not experienced temptations are not moved by them. For since they are not hungry but full, this food does not taste good to them; they are not thirsty. But they that are afflicted, and feel the right terror of conscience, know how great a consolation it is to have such a King, whose lips are so sweet, who comforts, and accepts, and waits for sinners, and bears them, as a shepherd waits for a wounded lamb, and bears it, even as he dies for sinners. This can raise up a broken heart, that the lips of this King overflow with fondness, that his wisdom with which he administers his kingdom is the word of life, and his kingdom a kingdom of grace, of blessedness, and of life, in which nothing is heard but the voice of comfort to the lowly, the voice of joy, and the voice of the Bridegroom.

But what does the world think of these lips? Namely, that they are heretical, that they condemn good works and forbid doing good, and only command that one should believe, as they accuse us today that the Lutherans teach nothing but faith. Therefore, just as our King Christ is considered by the world to be the most ugly of the children of men, so they also cry out that his lips overflow not with fervency but with devilish rage. Therefore they sing this verse in this way: You are the ugliest of the children of men and devilish rage flows from your lips. They do not sing it with such words, but in their hearts and minds they condemn and accuse Christ in such a way in all priests' colleges, in all monasteries, in all churches, that his voice is devilish and his tongue full of satanic poison, and that there is no more harmful pestilence than the teaching of Christ, which is worthy of the wrath and hatred of all men. But we, who are crushed and wretched, want to kiss these lips and hold them tight. It will one day be

It will happen that our king will destroy the churches and monasteries of those people because of these abominable blasphemies, so that not one stone will remain on the other. That is what they want, and it will certainly happen.

So far we have heard two things, that the person of the king is very beautiful and his wisdom exceedingly lovely, namely the wisdom of grace and not of the law. But all this must be taken in the spirit for the crushed and humbled. Now follows the third prize, of the power of this king, that this wisdom be not idle, but effectual, and have good prosperity, for it is blessed, as he saith:

Therefore, God blesses you forever.

Here again, see the contrast. The law is a teaching of curse, wrath, sin and death. Therefore it does not prosper, therefore there is no success, and finally it is also destroyed. But this doctrine is eternal and bears fruit from its beginning to the end: the saints are born and multiplied, and in each one also the various gifts and powers are increased. For, as St. Paul says [1 Cor. 12:4], "There are divers gifts, but there is One Spirit." This is the blessing that follows this word, that Christ grows and is increased in many thousands of believers. This blessing does not follow the teaching of the laws, whether they be moral or natural, or the worldly government. But it is hidden in the spirit and is not seen by the world; in their eyes we are killed, reviled, tormented, condemned, both according to our person and according to our gifts and fruits. But the blessing is not prevented. For if one Christian is killed, ten others are born. So also if the Word is prevented or expelled in One place, it is admitted and grows in other ten places. Therefore, the Word cannot be extinguished in any way, by any counsel, because it is written here that this blessing shall last forever. This, then, is the fruit of this wisdom, that it does not remain unfruitful, but continues and accomplishes marvelous things, breaking the gates of hell and all the plots of the wise.

V. 4. Gird up your sword at your side, you hero, and adorn yourself beautifully. 1)

The Latin translator has confused the order of the speech here. Therefore, this verse must be construed as we have rendered it in German: "Gird your sword at your side, hero, and adorn yourself beautifully." The Hebrew word XX and XXX is very common and is taken from Moses. But it means the adornment of garments, as in Ex. 28, 2. ff. where the Lord commands Moses to make his brother garments that are glorious and beautiful, for He wants him to be finely clothed and adorned. So also in the Psalms these two words [XXX and XXX, decor et laus] are often repeated [Ps. 104, 1.]. So also are they set here. For he does not speak of the beauty of the body, of which he spoke above, but of the royal and princely adornment and clothing, so that the kings adorn themselves when they go to public splendor or to war.

So the prophet now describes here in the fourth place, after he has praised the beauty and the wisdom, also the armor or power. For this is also necessary for a king, that he has a significant strength and power, but in such a way that the wisdom stands above. In the church, therefore, after Christ has begun to make wisdom known and to preach the word of salvation and grace, the cross immediately follows. For against this the devil lies down with the wise, the mighty, the saints, and the hypocrites, and all that is high in the world he stirs up against the word and the faithful. For he cannot endure the fervency of which the lips overflow, or the word of the gospel, because it destroys his kingdom. For the devil is the prince of death and the author of sin, and a spirit of sorrow and anguish of conscience, a spirit of lies and wickedness; and this also is the kingdom of the world. But Christ, as John says, has come to destroy the works of the devil.

and to destroy his kingdom [1 John 3:8] and to distribute the plunder. Now it cannot be otherwise than that the devil rages and is angry, for he does not want to lose his kingdom of wickedness and death. Therefore he attacks these messengers of the Word and kills them, frightens us 2) and does us harm, he drives us to despair and makes us sad, he stirs up mobs, heresies, tyrants, and so he defends himself from all ropes with violence and deceit and attacks the kingdom of Christ, and just as Christ destroyed the works of the devil, so also the devil wants to destroy the works of Christ, namely life, righteousness, joy 2c.

This we also learn today, that immediately after the gospel has risen, the peace of the world is suspended and disturbed. For as long as that strong man [Luc. 11:21] held his palace in good peace, there was peace; but as soon as the strong man comes upon him, he stirs up turmoil, then he rages and sets everything in confusion. Therefore one hears the complaints of the world, which are also now being raised everywhere, that before this teaching came, everything had been calm, peaceful and prosperous, but now, after one has begun to bring forward this teaching, everything is stirred up by turmoil, war and bloodshed take place, nothing has good prosperity any more 2c.

But such words are words of foolish people who do not know what is accomplished by the word. Christ works through the Word to deliver from death and sins, but the devil wants everything to be suppressed by death and sins. How, therefore, can it be otherwise than that peace is suspended, and each fights for the preservation of his kingdom, Christ against Satan through the ministry of the Word, Satan against Christ through his members, the heretics, false brethren, tyrants 2c.? Therefore, if you want to be joyful in Christ, you must suffer sorrow, anguish and plagues inwardly and outwardly for his sake. The reason for this is that you cannot cling to Christ without offending the prince of the world; you cannot keep the God of life unless you arouse the author of death against you. But

2) It seems to us that here instead of nos in the editions 608 should be read.

1) In the Vulgate the verses are divided thus: [V. 4.z Zladio tuo 8 aper ieinur tu um, potvntiskirue, [V. 5.z 8potũo tun 6t pulcNritndino tun intond6, prospere provecw 6t propter voritatom et inLusuetudiuem, et iustitium: 6t doduo6t te iuiradiliter dextera tun.

Inexperienced people cannot judge this, therefore they attribute to the holy word of God the cause of the noise, the riots, the heresies and other damages, the cause of which is the devil with his members. For why do they not allow the kingdom of Christ? Why do they claim for themselves the kingdom that is due to Christ? For man was created to possess life, blessedness, and righteousness: why then is the devil angry, since Christ deals with it, that he may forgive sins, that he may make alive, that he may make blessed, that he may keep his kingdom? The fact that the devil is angry and causes unrest in the world is not the fault of God, who out of pure mercy visits us with his words, but of the devil, who rages for his kingdom of sin and death, against the word. But the world does not believe this. God therefore does not care about their complaints, but breaks through with his word, however much they may grumble and rage, and says: The Lord will reign on earth; men, creatures, the world, and everything that is there, it is all mine.

Therefore, the war with the devil arises, who does not want to let the people of God go, as Pharaoh did not want to let the Jews go and fought against Moses. The same thing is still happening to us today. Since we want to carry out the people of God, Pharaoh becomes angry and stands up against us. Then the power of the word is shown, that Christ fights in us with his armor, with the shield of faith and the sword of the word, Eph. 6:16, 17, so that we defeat the enemy at all ends, first by exposing his deceit and lies in the heretics, then by saving and defending our people, so that they persevere in holy faith and life. This war continues forever, and there is no hope for peace. Therefore we must arm ourselves with patience, with faith, with the example of the cross of Christ against the tyrants, whom we overcome only with patience and silence. But we do not overcome the lying teachers with patience and silence, but against them we must draw the two-edged sword, with which we put to the ground all knowledge that rises up against the knowledge of God.

So here you see what kind of king we have. For after he has instructed us and poured out his promises upon us and thus transferred us into his kingdom through the word, the devil is immediately there and crucifies us, because [2 Tim. 3, 12.] "all who want to live godly in Christ must suffer persecution." Likewise, Apost. 14, 22: "We must go through much tribulation into the kingdom of GOD." But our King does not leave us, but is with us and fights in us against the violence of tyrants and against the lies of the devil, yes, makes us invincible against lying teachers and secure against the violence of tyrants.

Therefore you, my dear brothers and fathers, who in time will hold office in the church, should be armed and prepared, not only to teach and encourage the good who are of the right mind to believe, but also to be prepared to fight against the adversaries and to punish them. Otherwise the churches will soon be disturbed if there are not people who fight in the battle line and refute the adversaries, who explain the passages and sayings of Scripture that they claim for themselves and defend the truth. Therefore he says here: The LORD is mighty in battle, overcoming by patience all the power and tyranny of the world, and making of us (as it is said in Jeremiah Cap. 1, 13.) strong cities, a pillar of iron and a wall of brass, and, as Isaiah Cap. 50, 7. says, our face like a pebble, so that we can suffer all blows, imprisonment, bonds and death; in short, that we are able to overcome everything that the world and the devil in their highest wrath can only ever do through him who dwells in us. Thus we first overcome the power of tyrants, then he also overcomes in us when we fight against the wiles of Satan. This is our war, which, though dangerous and difficult, is exceedingly sweet, because the victory remains with us.

That he now says: "Gird [yourself]" is a promise, as if he wanted to say: You will be an exceedingly mighty giant, since you will defend your word in the saints and the gifts of the Holy Spirit through patience and refutation of the adversaries.

But he adds, "Put your sword at your side," and has taken the simile from the men of war, as if to say: You must be ready and armed at all times, so that the sword is at hand, not hanging on the wall in some corner covered with rust, so that even though it does not strike constantly, it is still at hand. Thus it is said in the Epistle to the Ephesians Cap. 6, 15: "Be ye booted up by the legs, as ready to press on the gospel of peace." For a minister of the word must be equipped to have the sword at hand. For though the devil rests at times, yet he returns; it is not necessary to snore as if he will cease altogether; he may cease for a time, but does not refrain from coming again. Therefore we must always be ready and expect the enemy at any moment, as Christ is said here to do, who is XXXX, that is, a giant, a strong man of war, and that for us, that we may not be afraid, though the world and the devil fight against Christ. For he is our king, that is, an exceedingly valiant king, to whom victory is assured. It follows:

Et laude et ornatu, that is, "adorn yourself beautifully". Why does he add this? He declares our warrior's weapons to be beautiful, not so shapeless and terrifying as the weapons of the devil, which are weapons of death, sin, wickedness, sadness. For the devil also has a sword, but a bloody, exceedingly shameful and evil one, but the weapons of our King are gracious. For the sword of our King smiteth not to destroy men, but to save them. Thus I fight against Carlstadt, Zwingli, and others, because I would rather they should live than perish and die; we wound, not to condemn men, but to heal and extirpate vice; we would preserve them, not destroy them; as Christ says [Luc. 9:56. Jn. 12:47.], "I am not come to destroy the world, but that it should live." Therefore, our sword holds forth the word of blessedness, of life, of righteousness, and seeks to bring people back to the right path.

to bring. They are therefore beautiful weapons, adorned with the power to teach, to make alive and to justify, but the weapons of the devil kill body and soul. We, on the other hand, make alive. Many are converted by our writings, many are preserved and snatched from the devil. Therefore, the weapons of our King are exceedingly beautiful, weapons full of life, bliss and power. With these gird and adorn yourself, that you may be such a man of war, whose wounding is a healing, whose killing is a bringing to life, whose destruction is a making blessed, because by our wars we seek nothing else than to cleanse nature of its vices and to tear it out of the captivity of the devil. Where this sword does not strike, nothing of the kind happens; on the other hand, where it strikes, it brings about righteousness, life and salvation.

This is the reason why he calls the weapons of this king a prize and an adornment, and although he would rather call them simply a prize and an adornment, and not weapons, yet he uses this name "weapons" and "sword" for the sake of the word and the power of the word. When this is admitted into the hearts, it is like a sword that kills, and by killing makes alive and adorns, so that the heart, which is glad because of its trust in this King, despises and overcomes all dangers and evils. For it is not bodily weapons that wound the body, but spiritual ones, and with the power of God, with which we defend ourselves against the devil, when he imposes new heresies and cults, with which he makes the world nonsensical and tears it away from the Word. These weapons are to be used to defend ourselves and to preserve, protect and fortify others, so that Satan does not overthrow everything as he has in mind. But those who despise us and oppose us, who think that our weapons are nothing, and say that we do not understand the Scriptures and lack the Spirit, as Muenzer said. They make our sword weak and defile our ornaments; before them our doctrine is not a doctrine of life, and we are not XXXX but slain and slain men of war.

V. 5. May you succeed in your adornment. Draw near to the truth, and keep the wretched in the right, and thy right hand shall do wonders.

Instead of *intende prospere*, it would have been better translated: *In ornatu tuo prosperare*, "you must prosper in your adornment". But you know how this verse has been misused (*laceratus*) in the papacy and applied to the holy virgin. Nothing of this is said here. For he speaks of the kingdom of Christ, therefore he indicates the fruit of this armor, as if he wanted to say: Not in vain do we refute the adversaries, not in vain do we defend the word of truth against the sects, not in vain do we comfort the fainthearted with the word of patience; this word is efficacious, for it is the word of God and does not depart without fruit, as Isaiah speaks of it [Cap. 55, 11.].

Instead of *procede et regna* should have been translated: *Adscende, or prospere equita*, "go forth," as it were, as a king rides into a city, or goes forth to war. For you will be blessed with this armor of yours. So it must be translated by the indicative *futuri*: Your weapons will be blissful, you will be fortunate in war. And this is the fifth prize, which is taken from success. For it belongs to a good commander (*imperatorem*) that he also has luck, as Cicero wisely discusses in relation to Pompey. Therefore he also adds this price. He says: It is a hard war. The king goes along on the chariot, and we also go along with him in war chariots (for he talks according to the old way of waging war), or we ride together, but with great success. For although the adversaries are exceedingly mighty and many in number, yet we are victorious. Because in this battle One servant of the Word dares to fight with ten thousand, he dares to attack the whole papacy, the pope, the bishops, the princes, the kingdoms, innumerable sects. Thus, the One Paul fought against the whole world.

But who would dare to fight as an individual against so great wisdom and power, and not only against the

wisdom and power of the world, but also of the devil and the gates of hell? Therefore this is a hard war, not only because of our weakness, as it has the reputation, and because of our small number, but also because of the power, wisdom and quantity of the adversaries. For Christ also says Luc. 16, 8. that the children of this world are wiser than the children of light. Therefore it is not to be wondered at that weak people prefer to resign from the teaching office rather than to arouse so many wise people, so many saints, so many mighty men, even the whole world together with the gates of hell against them. In addition, there is the ingratitude of the people, the contempt and disdain for the Word, in short, everywhere there is nothing but misfortune before one's eyes: abroad (*foris*) the Word is persecuted, here it is despised and neglected; the preachers have to die almost of hunger and get no other reward for their godly work than ingratitude and hatred. Where is the success here? Certainly only in spirit.

Therefore, rise up, do not give way to evils, but go all the more boldly against them; persevere, do not be swayed, neither by contempt and ingratitude from within, nor by turmoil and rage from without, but think like this: When I am weak, I am strongest; when I am oppressed, I rise, as a palm tree rises against its burden. This is how we thought we were going down at Augsburg, but that is where we have risen the most. Thus, in sadness, when we are already very close to despair, hope arises the most. This is how the true glory of the Word begins nowadays, when there is the greatest contempt and disdain for the Word. Therefore, we should learn to understand this verse about the invisible progress and prosperity of the Word. For our King has success and happiness, though you do not see it; nor would it be good for us to see this success, because then we would be puffed up. But now he raises us up by faith, so that we may hope that, though we see no fruit of faith, yet, because it is written here, we may be sure that there will be no lack of fruit, but that it will surely follow. But we should not lose heart by looking at the opposite.

We should not look at the things that are burdensome to us, but rather look at these promises. For Christians, according to the example of their Lord Christ, must be weak and despised, so that by their good deeds they deserve nothing but the highest contempt and the utmost ingratitude, so that those who are in the teaching office teach with the greatest fidelity and should expect no other reward than to be killed by the world and trampled underfoot and despised by their own. But this is very difficult.

Therefore, when I see this, I too am sometimes overcome with impatience and seriously think: if this teaching were not already spread, I would rather do something else than make it known to the ungrateful world. But these thoughts are thoughts of the flesh, and they are evil. For let the race be as ungrateful as it will, misusing the word as much as it will, yet one must not resign from the teaching office, but one must endure and persevere, and command the success and happiness of the word to God. For he is such a king who wants success, strength and victory, if not in this place and time, then in another place and time. This splendor and success is more brilliant than all the stars, even though we do not see it.

The words *propter veritatem et mansuetudinem et iustitiam* [to benefit the truth and to keep the wretched in justice] must be connected with the preceding *verbum*, so that the meaning is: You will succeed, you will be happy in your war, in your knighthood. Wherefore? That thou mayest promote truth and oppressed justice. For this is how we render it and do not follow Jerome. For the word which the prophet uses here means suffering, miserable, oppressed. The meaning is therefore: Your truth and righteousness suffers, is despised and oppressed, outwardly by tyranny and lies of the devil, but with us by contempt and ingratitude, then also in our conscience. So there is nothing more miserable, nothing more despised than the truth and righteousness of Christ. Because they want to destroy the kingdom of the devil, that is, the kingdom of sin, death, and hell, the

They are not the devil, who has the largest part of the world, the most powerful, the holiest, the wisest, the richest. Therefore, what they say and say seems to be the very real truth, as Oekolampad wrote of his cause: "The very certain truth is on our side. They also seem to be the most successful, we, on the other hand, the most unfortunate, who get stuck everywhere. "We do not want to go anywhere, but our chariot is stuck in the deep mud. Such is our ministry and our teaching.

But this is written for the sake that we may learn that this must be our destiny, as Christ says to his disciples [John 16:4]: "These things have I spoken unto you, that when the time shall come ye may remember them. Therefore, teach purely and faithfully, and expect, when you do all things, not honor, but dishonor and contempt; not riches, but poverty, violence, imprisonment, death and all dangers. This is what your king tells you beforehand, that you should not expect anything else in this life, but in the life to come; only then will he give you the right reward for your work, so that, while others are plunged into hell, a glorious place in heaven will be assigned to you before others; just persevere. On our side there is nothing but misfortune, but with this our King there is happiness and victory, though hidden in faith. But after faith has fought bravely in the war, then victory will also come and be seen, so that in this life we will also attain peace and other goods more. Therefore he says to Christ:

See to it that you bring truth and oppressed righteousness to glory, that you establish the kingdom of truth and exalt degraded righteousness, because the devil sets himself with all his might to establish lies, to destroy truth; this truth is precisely the faith that establishes the right worship of God and the right worship of God. Therefore, the devil cannot stand it, but stirs up against it innumerable and various religions and hypocrisies, so that if Christ did not help us to firmly establish his kingdom and defend the truth, we would perish and could not stand against so many sects, with which

The devil looks at us, against so many lies and fights, which all aim to establish lies and idolatry, to spread ungodly opinions about God and to turn away from faith and truth. Therefore help us, dear Lord Christ, be the strong warrior, so that you defend the truth, which is also suppressed in our country, but is considered heresy, error and blasphemy by the world; and there is nothing that is considered more ungodly or as wretched as the truth.

Thus, God's righteousness alone is miserable and oppressed. All other righteousnesses have a certain appearance and honor. The philosophers praise their righteousness and adorn it with mighty praises; the emperor also praises his own and raises it up, but it is this one righteousness of Christ against which all others rage; it is despised, disgraced, lies underfoot and in the dust. Therefore, dear Lord Christ, emphasize your word and preserve for us this righteousness that has been trampled underfoot, which is the only and true righteousness. Preserve the truth, which is accused of being a lie. But if thou wilt so go to war with thy armor that thou wilt help the truth and the despised righteousness of faith, then

This is how your right hand will prove miracles.

Hold on to the war and you will achieve miraculous success, "hold on tight, you will see miracles, what will come out of it". Read the histories of the ancient church and you will understand this verse. St. Hilarius lived at a time when justice was degraded to the lowest degree and truth was condemned in the most violent way, since hardly two sincere bishops kept their congregations, and all other congregations had accepted the abomination of Arius. At that time, truth and righteousness were in complete decline, and yet Christ came and drove out the Arians with their heresy, and the truth remained intact. Thus the Pelagians trampled our justice and truth into the dust; the Sacramentarians and the Anabaptists are doing the same today, and there will be more of them. Therefore prepare yourselves with these promises that Chri

stus will be a blessed warrior with us, and you will see miracles performed by the right hand of Christ, which seems to have become weak. Thus our cause has several times escaped certain dangers, so that when we look back, there is nothing else before our eyes but nothing but miraculous works, which were quite incredible before they happened: Christ has governed all this so wonderfully.

Therefore the prophet reminds us in this passage, when he says that we shall see wonders, that this truth is insurmountable, so that we may learn to suffer, to stand and to persevere, and think: "Let whoever will fall away, whether it be the priest, or father, or mother, or prince, 2c. nevertheless I will not fall away, but will remain with the oppressed righteousness. If I am therefore oppressed and killed, that may happen after all; if I only persevere, I shall see the wonders of this right hand, and that the sinners receive their reward who suppress justice and truth. Muenzer, Zwingli and others thought they would get where they were going, "they thought they would sing out the little song like this"; but before they get started, they perish.

The same will happen to our princes and bishops who sing the song of the donkeys, which begins high and ends low. For they will not stop until this right of our God shows miracles and does what no one can even think of now; so you will also see, when you look back, that God has done more than anyone could have hoped for. At least I could not have hoped twelve years ago that it would be possible that even in a vain corner the monks would fall away, that the monastic vows would be despised, that the marriages of the priests would take place in public, which is happening now. For even though this does not yet happen with the papists, they maintain and defend their cause only with difficulty.

It is that he says: "Your right hand will prove miracles", because it is the right hand of God. Thus he comforts us in the tribulations of our oppressed justice and truth. Even if the emperor, the pope, the princes, the bishops, the citizens and the peasants condemn the same, we have to condemn violence,

If we suffer cunning, deceit, poverty, disgrace, rebellion, we will not be in danger. For our man of war is mighty. "He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world" [1 John 4:4]. Who says [John 15:19, 19:33], "I have slain you, the world hateth you: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," for I am the blessed warrior who makes oppressed righteousness triumphant, as he says, "Thy right hand shall shew wonders," that is, in thy kingdom shall wonders be seen, which thy right hand doeth by the sword, that is, by the word. For we do nothing but teach the word, believe, and pray; when this is done, miraculous works follow.

V. 6: Sharp find your arrows, that the nations fall down before you in the midst of the king's enemies.

In corde inimicorum regis should be translated, "in the midst of the king's enemies." Here he describes arms and fortune. You will not only be well armed, but also the fortune of which you are worthy, and the royal victory, for the nations will fall down before you in the midst of (in corde) 2c. Here is a Hebrew way of speaking [namely, in corde]. The heart always means the center in figurative speech among the Hebrews. Thus they say: in the heart of the earth, in the heart of the sea, that is, in the middle of the earth, in the middle of the sea, as also Christ speaks in the Gospel (Matth. 12, 40. Vulg.: in corde terrae). Thus it is said in Moses [Deut. 4, 11.]: Thou sawest fire unto the heart of heaven, that is, unto the midst of heaven. So it says here: in corde inimicorum, that is, in the midst of the enemies. Such were Joseph [of Arimathea], Nicodemus, and others at Jerusalem, whom Christ plucked out of the midst of the enemies, Pilate, Herod, Caiphas, and others. Thus in Rome, at the court of the emperor himself, some Roman soldiers were converted. So with us today, in the courts and even in the chambers of princes, bishops, the pope, and everywhere where there are only enemies of our King, one can find a people falling at Christ's feet, people pierced with these exceedingly

healing arrows, that is, those who hear the gospel and are wounded by the loving word of Christ, by which he instructs to faith and strikes, just as such converts confess that this teaching penetrates and strikes the heart like no other.

The word is therefore the arrow of which the prophet says here, as we also call the word an arrow in German figurative speech: "The arrow does not come out of the quiver." Likewise, "A thrust that does not bleed." There is a special power in this image, because it does not simply mean a word, but very sharp words that penetrate the heart and are a sting to it, as it is said of Christ in Matth. 7, 28. f. that the people were astonished at Christ's teaching, because he preached mightily, and not like the scribes. These taught as it were in sleep, just as Erasmus, who is otherwise a very eloquent man, nevertheless writes in theology so coldly, dully and leadenly that it comes to light that he does nothing seriously, "that it neither sticks nor clicks; it neither strikes nor wounds," it does not strike, leaves no sting in the hearts of the readers. But Christ's word penetrates and wounds, takes away all supports of [false] confidence, and ascribes redemption to the blood of Christ alone; this stings and wounds the heart. But this is a healing wounding. For these weapons so kill that they make alive. For the word of God is mightier and sharper than any sword [Heb. 4:12]. Therefore it follows:

The nations fall down before you.

That is to say, they humble themselves under you, they leave their own opinions, their worship, their pleasures, and worship you. This is an exceedingly blissful falling away and a sinking into blessedness, so that those who before were quite evil in trusting in their own righteousness now lie quite blissfully in the righteousness of Christ. But this happens, he says, not on the borders, but "in the midst of the King's enemies," that is, where it is least expected. For the Gospel does not penetrate the homes of peasants alone, but at court, into the chambers and hearts of princes. This is a glorious victory through which

the power and efficacy of the word comes to light, which forces success and prosperity, and does not cease until it captures many peoples who, pierced by the healing arrows, become different people and begin to love Christ whom they hated before; begin to fear and revere Christ whom they did not care about before. This is called "falling down before Him." But it is a blessed and altogether comforting case, which shows the power and happiness of the word.

But, as you know, we have begun to divide the whole Psalm into certain parts, through which he describes our King and Lord, with words that are highly poetic or rather figurative. And we have heard so far of the weapons and his going out to war, how he is equipped and armed with a sword and shining knighthood, likewise of his success, that he succeeds well, that he is a helper and originator of the oppressed justice. All this seems to depict a shining and worldly king by heart, but it must be drawn from the flesh to the spirit, in which one can see this glory. For by heart things are much different; there the subjects of this king are very miserable, not only in their bodily members, but in their whole flesh itself, which is tormented by terror, affliction, sadness, despair and other tortures of the devil. This is what the eminently good poet and teacher means when he says that Christ is a king of the sorrowful and despairing, who are seized and oppressed by anxieties of conscience and the fiery darts of the devil, who torments us day and night in body and soul, so that he snatches away our confidence in Christ. That is why the prophecies of this king are exceedingly sweet and the king himself very charming. For he is a king who will not break the bruised reed or quench the smoldering wick, but comes to refresh, heal and comfort. This is what the Psalm says with these words, that he comes to protect the righteousness of the wretched, or the wretched and oppressed righteousness. And you know that this is taught among us daily, so that this King may be fully known, and we do not make of him a Moses who

is frightening and terrifying. Christ is not like this, for he did not come to judge the world, but that the world through him might be saved and healed [John 3:17]. For in this all scriptures agree that he is a king of the fainthearted and the afflicted, which is the highest comfort of godly hearts.

And here the prophet has mentioned success in a very appropriate way; for, as I said above, it is not enough that the king is armed and powerful, but success must also be added, as Cicero praises his Pompey for being a fortunate general. For however great power may be, it is nothing if it is without success. In war, however, fortune prevails, because it is a great thing which cannot be governed by human prudence. For nowhere does success correspond less to advice than in war. Therefore, happiness must be given by God, and the angels must be with him who is victorious. For the strength of the army is not enough to bring victory, but the prosperity is also necessary.

Furthermore, of the blessed weapons of our King, the prophet names only the arrows; but he understands by this name as the most distinguished also all other projectiles, as we consider the coarse guns (bombardas) to be the most distinguished. But there is an emphasis in the fact that he calls the arrows sharp, namely that they are sharpened from heaven and directed by the Holy Spirit. For only when this is present are the arrows sharp. The weapons of the enemy also seem to be sharp, but because they are only sharpened by blacksmiths and men, they do not penetrate. But these strike and penetrate in such a way that the adversaries are thrown to the ground, and, what is even more marvelous, that in the midst of the raging of the enemies our King has a people who serve Him. For Christ has set his kingdom in the world without walls, without any fortifications, exposed to all dangers and evils, like sheep in the midst of wolves. Who then will protect these sheep? For the victory is not doubtful, when a sheep is set against a wolf in battle: and yet

Christ uses to do this; he places his faithful warriors like sheep in the midst of the enemies, offers them power and bullets with which they can knock down the enemies, but by which his own are converted and preserved, even against the will of the gates of hell.

But this would be obvious if we could see with spiritual eyes the multitude of devils by which we are surrounded. For although we are surrounded on all sides by angry and furious bishops and princes who wish us to be exterminated, who shoot at us with treachery and secret plots to destroy us, this is nothing compared to that spiritual warfare, that we are surrounded on all sides by many thousands of devils who spew out against us the whole hell and attack us with very large armies. For there is no doubt that Satan is after us with all his might; and the less he can do harm, the more he wants to do harm and expends all his effort on it, and he is not only furious, but fury itself. Therefore, we would despair if we saw all these dangers and the devil's efforts. But God and our King comforts us: Be brave in war, he says, fight, have bullets and sharp arrows; hurl them at the enemy, you will succeed. But how unequal is this battle! What am I, what are our thousands against one devil? Here it is needful that we say with Elisha [2 Kings 6:16], "There are more of them that are with us than of them that are with them." For where there are twenty devils, there are a hundred angels, and if it were not for that, we would have perished long ago. For we are then in the battle line when we teach the Word, when we preach and praise Christ, and thereafter, as much as possible, live according to the Gospel and words of God.

Therefore, let us also take this passage as a consolation that he says, "In the midst of the king's enemies." Although there is a change here from the second person to the third, this is very common in Hebrew. For GOD, by these words, turns all that terrifies us away from us to his person, because he does not call them our enemies, but the enemies of the king, as if he were saying

wanted: You suffer these things from the devil, not for your sake, but for mine; I am the guilty one, it is I whom the devil has in mind, it is my fault, against me the world rages. Why then do you despair? Why then do you torment yourselves with terror and despair? They are not your enemies, but mine, who am your king. Therefore, continue teaching and preaching, endure the tribulations, and let me fight against them. I will see how I protect you, I will be a fiery wall all around you who are my people. You do not need trenches or walls of brass; I will defend you as I defended my people at the Red Sea when I set up the fiery cloud between them and Pharaoh, through which even the devil cannot break through who sees this fiery wall; we do not see it.

But we want to believe God, who assures us that he protects us, that we are surrounded by a fiery wall, through which the devil cannot break through. From afar he hurls fiery darts at us to make us sad; we, on the other hand, who are hidden behind that wall, shoot at him; and those who are sad or not converted, we comfort with the word and convert them, thus leading them back to Christ. Because this hurts the devil, he directs other projectiles against us; then we again look up to our King Christ and overcome. So there is no truce, but we fight with the devils day and night. This is what the Psalm says: "The nations shall fall down in the midst of thine enemies." For if Christ were not our wall and our guide, we could not stand even for a moment, because the devil is so powerful that he can snatch away our faith and obscure the truth of Christ. Therefore, if Christ were to remove his hand, the devil would not only kill the body, but would also pervert the spirit. Therefore, we cannot do anything against him with our strength, but must look up to this king and know that he is such a king whom the devil persecutes. Therefore, if we suffer for the sake of Christ, may all kinds of dangers come upon us.

Our king will keep the victory, and not only defend us, but also conquer us, rob the adversaries and distribute the spoils, and win a great number, so that those who were hitherto the devil's robbers and weapons will be brought to faith by us, snatched from the devil by the word. This is what he says: "In the midst of the enemies", or in the heart, where there seems to be the most strength against Christ, as in the courts of princes 2c.

But it matters little, as I said above, whether "the arrows" are taken for the Word itself or for the teachers and ministers of the Word, as it is said in Isaiah, "I will take thee for a bow," and Isa. 49:2, "He hath made me a pure arrow." For an apostle who teaches the Word is, as it were, a sharp arrow. So also the word of the Holy Spirit is a sharp arrow, that is, happy and successful and powerful. For the word is not idle, but directs many and great things, comforts the afflicted, guides the nathless (perplexos), leads the erring and sets them right, and creates many other innumerable fruits, and is even an omnipotent thing; therefore it is rightly called a sharp arrow.

Therefore, our king is the protector and savior of the miserable, exceedingly full of comfort against the humble and afflicted, and completely victorious against the enemies and the hardened, and we are quite certain of victory if we only hold on to this king. For what kind of kingdom would it be in which one would always have to be in the midst of the enemies, be exposed to all the ambushes and bullets, always suffer and be oppressed? There must inevitably be a change, and those who have suffered so much must finally achieve victory. Therefore, victory is certain if we only persevere, as Paul says in 2 Cor. 2:14: "Thanks be to God, who always gives us victory in Christ." For Christians do not succumb to despair and distrust, do not depart from the Word, do not deny Christ, but persevere with doctrines, and confess Him; sometimes, to be sure, strongly, but sometimes only weakly. For he is a victorious king and a king of the miserable, who can raise us up, even if we are weak at times.

Up to this point he has described the king according to his person, his wisdom, weapons, victories, government, 2c., and has painted him as an exceedingly fine and lovely king of the wretched. But we see from such lovely descriptions that the holy men had a greater joy only in hearing about the future Christ and were more inflamed with love for him than we rejoice and are moved by the Christ who has already appeared, so that it is evident that the saying is true: The nearer Rome, the poorer Christians. Moses says [Deut. 32:15], "When my people grew fat and thick and strong, they became horny." Because we are overwhelmed with the Word, we do not respect it. If the Word were not so abundant, we might be more careful. But for the sake of the godly, the word must abound in momentum. But I return to the psalm.

Now follows the other part of the king, how he keeps himself at home, rules in the realm and speaks law. For this also belongs to the office of a king, that he has a council (*consistorium*) and a judgment seat, and the emperor is painted in such a way that he not only holds the sword in one hand, but also the book in the other. So far he has described the sword, now he will describe the book, as Justinian says of the emperor that he must be adorned with weapons and armed with lawsⁱⁿ a wonderful and new figure of speech, that the laws are weapons, the sword an ornament. But he meant to indicate that these two things must be connected with each other, the government at the time of war outwardly and at the time of peace at home. In time of peace, justice and equity are required; in time of war, weapons are necessary, so that he may be blissful and strong outwardly, but just at home.

V. 7. God's chair remains forever and ever.

This verse is sufficiently treated in the epistle to the Hebrews Cap. 1, 8. ff., although only a part of it is treated there and used to prove the deity of Christ. But we learn from this passage not only

that Christ is true GOD by nature, but we are also reminded of his office, that he must administer justice and maintain discipline and order in his kingdom. "Thy throne," he says, that is, thy royal throne, "is eternal." This is a free and full confession of his government, that the prophet, before the revelation of the Gospel, prefigures such a king, whom no other person should succeed, but who, as an eternal one, reigns his kingdom for all eternity. Therefore this psalm cannot be understood by a temporal king, or by a king who is only a man, because it is certain that all must die, according to the words [1 Cor. 15:22], "In Adam all die." Therefore it is impossible that it could be said of a man that he is an eternal king, but it is a clear proof that the kingdom of which he here speaks is not a fleshly one. For since he calls the throne an eternal one, and says that he also who is king is eternal, it follows that he is not a king in the flesh or a temporal one, who cares nothing for gold, silver, and other things that belong to a temporal kingdom.

Secondly, since he is truly human (for he says that he is the most beautiful of the children of men), it also follows that he has another life than the one in which we live. And yet, because it is written that he is beautiful, and it is clear that he is a man, it must follow that he is also mortal; and yet that he is also eternal, because it is said, "God, thy throne abideth forever and ever." Now hold this against each other. For the text says that he is among the sons of men where death reigns; therefore he must necessarily die, and yet he says that he will be eternal. One therefore concludes from this passage the resurrection of the dead, because our King is of such a kind, who, truly God made man, finally dies like other men and leaves this life, and, rising from death, takes to himself an eternal life, so that he may be the King of eternal life, who nevertheless lived in this mortal life, as he says John 16:28: "I leave the world and go to the Father." That is, I will leave this office, which I have hitherto held among you in the world, and will go to the Father.

that is, I will receive the kingdom and take on another life so that I may be a king of eternal life for all my believers. This eternal life he also begins here in our hearts. For if we begin to believe in Christ after we are baptized, then we are free from death, sin and the devil according to faith and word. Therefore, we have the beginning of eternal life and the firstfruits in this life, and have a kind of small foretaste; we have entered the vestibule, but soon, when we are stripped of the flesh, we will taste everything completely.

From this passage it is evident that Christ is a true man, and yet not a temporal but an eternal king, that is, also a true God, who, though he died, yet rose again from death. For it is not up to a man or a creature to overcome death. For as the whole creation (creatio) comes from God alone, so also no one can create life, which is also God's creation, except God alone. It follows that Christ is true God, since he creates life and devours death. Therefore, he here expressly calls him God and describes him as being God and man, and God by nature, and Lord of death, who overcame death in himself for all of us, since death could not hold him, as Peter says [Acts 2:24], because otherwise he would have held the divine person, who is composed (but the sophists forbid that one should speak in this way) or united from two natures, so that he constitutes One Person, who is true God and true man. If Satan had devoured these, he would be said to have devoured the Godhead or the divine person. But God cannot die (*nescit mori*), so mankind, which was united with the Godhead, could not die either.

Therefore, everything that takes hold of this divine person and everything that is attached to him will escape death, not by his own power, but by the beneficence of this divine person, as he said [John 16:33]: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

also live." I have become a death to death and a sin to sin, as the prophets [Hos. 13:14] and the apostles [Rom. 8:3] say. That I therefore escape death, who nevertheless have become a slave to death because of sin, is the effect not of my powers, but of Christ, who gives this, since he says: I am the prince of life, the immortal person, whom death cannot overcome. Therefore join yourselves to me and cling to me, become my members: then it will come to pass that where I am, there you will be also. For we have such a King, which so reigneth, that in this life he beginneth eternal life. But as far as we are concerned, it is an imperfect kingdom, because it has only begun; it is not perfect, but will be perfect when he hands over the kingdom to the Father [1 Cor. 15:24]; then we will see God fully, face to face.

Meanwhile, while we are living here, this is the ministry of Christ, that he begins the kingdom of life and destroys the kingdom of death and sin, until he transfers his own from this misery into eternal life. It is therefore not necessary to think of Christ in the same way as either the Turks, who idly put Christ in some corner and think that Mahomet has become his successor, or the Papists, who have the opinion, which is no better by any means, that Christ is sitting idly somewhere and awaiting the day of judgment when he will flash forth against sinners. That is why they take refuge in the intercessions of the saints, invoke the Blessed Virgin and other saints. But this is to make Christ useless, which is not to be done, but to believe that he works, to believe that he rules, fights, has a chair and scepter, upholds and gives justice, and does all this daily with great power in the church. As we see, then, that the Scriptures are treated and interpreted, and one also lives according to them, as far as one's inherent weakness is concerned. All the words that are heard about Christ are that he himself does everything. Everyone who is protected against sin, against the spirits of the imagination, and against other evils, is protected by Christ, who does this in us and through us. For if he were not in us,

we could not even speak a word about him, as Paul testifies in 1 Cor. 12:3: "No one can call Jesus Lord without the Holy Spirit. Therefore Christ is not idle, as he would be if we were silent, as he is idle with the papists and other sects and the Turks, with whom he does nothing because they do not want him to rule over them. But with us he thinks, works and lives everything that is ours.

The kingdom of Christ is therefore actually that, that he reigns in this life and after this life will give righteousness and eternal life fully. This, however, he does in this way: After we have been baptized and enlightened by the gospel, and have begun to trust and cleave to this King, yet sin nevertheless remains in our flesh, and innumerable darts of the devil break forth, evil living, sects, weakness, because Christians are negligent both in works and words, and do not fight with zeal. This is where Christ's throne and ministry are most seen, that he sweeps out the old leaven and increases his kingdom, overcoming the evil that is growing. And this is the divine righteousness, which is continually increasing, that if any man fall, he may be restored; but if he will not that he be excluded, that the wrath of God be announced unto him, and the fellowship which is in Christ be denied him.

But all these things are for the increase of faith, that we may grow in the knowledge of God, and also that our bodies may be killed and preserved in chastity, patience, and other Christian virtues, and that we may fight against the hosts of sin. Now all these things are Christ's ministries. Therefore, when I rebuke and reprove men either publicly in sermons or specifically, Christ reproves. And that means to fight the ever-growing sin and to put away the sin that always clings to us and makes us sluggish, as it says in the letter to the Hebrews Cap. 12, 1. For it weighs us down and troubles us continually, as we see that Christians often fall. Sometimes I fall because of angry or hopeful thoughts, sometimes I am plagued by the devil with sadness or despair, sometimes the pope breaks down and I fall.

and the hordes with their many aversions come in and fight against me. There I oppose and resist; I punish and admonish. But who does all this? Certainly Christ, who sits on his throne and judges against the sin that grows again. This is therefore the judgment of this King, which Paul pronounces [Rom. 6:12]: "Let not sin reign in your mortal body, but reign over its lusts." For just as no city ever has such obedient and good citizens that it does not need judgments and authorities, so with Christians there are always hidden in the flesh and in the emotions of the soul the remnants of anger, pride, unchastity, 2c. which strive to raise their heads and continue to challenge us. The word is necessary that you read the word, hear it, mean it, go into your closet, bend your knees and pray. This means first to put down the sin that grows again, which fights against us and takes us captive.

Therefore, it is necessary for a Christian to fight against it in such a way. If we do not resist in this way, but are idle and do not punish ourselves or others, we cannot tell whether we believe in truth or not. But this is the sign that Christ is exercising judgment among us and is strong among us, that the voice of punishment and rebuke is still heard, the voice of rebuke against the devil, the voice by which the sects are scourged and beaten, by which the offenses are restrained and punished. These flashes come from the throne of Christ, and are certain signs that Christ is there and is judging. But faith and the other fruits of faith grow through this judgment that Christ exercises in us.

Therefore, learn to open your eyes and to know the church and to believe that it is holy. For all wise people today are offended by this figure of the church. Because reason hears that the church is holy and without blemish, it thinks that Christians are without blemish. And of course, even Christians can hardly overcome the ailments in which they sometimes find themselves, and they also draw the conclusion from their works:

You are not so pure from sins, so you are not a Christian. Therefore, one must certainly determine here what is "holy". For the church is not called holy because it has no sin at all, for Paul says [Rom. 6:12.], "Let not sin reign," namely, "render obedience to it." He confesses that there is sin and evil desire in Christians, and exhorts that they not let sin reign. Therefore, the church is holy and is called holy according to her firstfruits, not according to her tithes and abundance. She is holy by faith in the name of Christ, in which she has purity; in herself she has not the same, but for His name's sake she is holy. For sins are hidden in the saints, but still sins that are made servants, not those that reign, which, to be sure, sometimes burst forth, so that they are moved by impatience, sadness, despair 2c. These are the lusts of sin, but not their dominion. For although they oppress me, I nevertheless take hold of Christ and trample underfoot this impatience and sadness and keep the remnants of sin in check.

The church is therefore holy in its head Christ, and it is pure in the name of Christ, but it is not holy and pure in itself, and in hidden and murmuring sins, as wild beasts bound with fetters, murmur and desire to harm. For our sin is bound and imprisoned with bands; though it would gladly be loosed from the bands and be free, yet it must be resisted. When the devil wants to plunge you into sadness and take away your faith, rise up in faith, and say to him, "Lift yourself up, Satan, and be silent; my Christ lives. So, when the sects stir up trouble, say: Be silent, here is the word of God, which you will not overthrow 2c.

Therefore, one must recognize and believe that the church is holy, but one should not see it as holy, because the article of faith says: "I believe a holy church", not: "I see a holy church". Now, if you want to judge by sight, you will see that it is sinful, you will see that it has many and innumerable aversions, you will see brethren who have passions about them, and you will see that the church is holy.

(fratres passionatos, as they are called), that one is moved by impatience, another by anger, another in some other way. Therefore it is not written: I see a holy church, but, "I believe," because it has not a righteousness of its own from itself, but from Christ who is its head, and in this faith I perceive its holiness, which is a holiness that must be believed, which cannot be grasped or seen with hands.

But I say this in so many words for the sake of comfort against certain people who, when they see even a small bruise on our body, make it extraordinarily high: Behold, these are the fruits of the gospel, and the like, while meanwhile they themselves are utterly leprous. They do not see and do not care about the dangerous boils and sores they are full of, and they do not blame us for the slightest thing. They say: Is it not necessary to punish these Christians, in whom no particular holiness is evident? They eat, drink, dress and work like other people 2c. Yes, indeed, you should be able to see with your impure eyes the true holiness of the church! But even if you cannot see anything else, you can see this, that there is not such a bitter spitefulness among them as among the adversaries, and moreover they have the pure word. They handle it diligently, comfort each other with the word of Christ, and perform other Christian duties, which you do not see, nor are you worthy to see, because the right fruits and the certain signs of the church are hidden from your eyes, which know how to correct very small infirmities, but do not see the great miraculous deeds, which the church performs. For is it not a great wonder that I can teach the word, but another can hear it, and that while the devil will not suffer it, and opposes it? But they are not worthy that they should see it.

Therefore know that the church is holy, but in such a way that Christ may do right, that he may reprove the faithful by taking away sins and condemning them. For there is sin in the flesh, seeking dominion over the spirit. The small

The lust of sin would like to reign and have faith extinguished; unchastity would also like to reign in the flesh of a young man when he has seen a beautiful girl: but Christians do not obey it. Though they are tickled by sin, yet they keep their evil lust in check, do not perform fornication, or seek to break marriage. They feel the vices, but do not give dominion to the evil desire. But you wanted them to have no sin at all. But this is because you do not know that the holiness of the church consists in this, that it is written here that Christ is judge and sits on his throne, that he fights out the sins, that he resists, so that aversions do not creep in, so that our conscience does not overwhelm us, so that our faith is not endangered by despair, but that the fruits of the spirit, patience, love 2c. increase.

But these fruits will never be perfect, because we always feel flesh and blood in us. Therefore, it is necessary to purify from day to day, and to increase the firstfruits that we received in baptism, and thus to strive for perfection. But this is impossible if we do not struggle daily with the devil, the law and sin. We would like to be pure, but because this is impossible in this flesh, Christ is there and eradicates sin. Then the devil returns and challenges us again. Now Christ is with us anew and brings us help. Thus, where Christ is, these vices are not committed, although they are felt in the flesh, and adultery, theft, strife are not tolerated with us, but are punished more severely than anywhere else. So our King is with us, judging us with measure, not with wrath [Jer. 10:24], in such a way as to subdue and extinguish the remnants of sin that dwell in our flesh.

The scepter of your realm is a straight scepter.

So far we have heard that the prophet distinguishes this kingdom of Christ according to all circumstances and parts from all other kingdoms of the world, so that in no way will a kingdom be found in the world that is equal to this one

be. But if there is any resemblance, it is hardly in mere words and a faint shadow or outward appearance. But as far as the essential (*potiorem*) part is concerned, everything is quite different, because this kingdom is an eternal and spiritual one, which is ruled by one person, who is both God and man, mortal and immortal, who has passed from this life into another, and rules for life against death, for righteousness against sin, for blessedness against damnation. But as all that has been said here is such that it belongs to no other kingdom, except in a faint shadow, so there is no other king who lives forever, but they live only for a time, and others follow them. So also that which follows, namely the staff (*virga*) or the straight scepter, belongs only to the kingdom of Christ. But the staff means a scepter, the badge of a king. For as the crown signifies the power and government of the kingdom, so the scepter signifies the law, the laws, the wisdom which governs the kingdom. But the scepter of this kingdom is praised with special praise, that it is straight, not crooked or full of knots, that is, that it does injustice to no one, but executes justice in the most exact way (*in ipso puncto mathematico*).

For as blissful and well-ordered as the other kingdoms may be, they have innumerable defects, to such an extent that it is impossible to find even one worldly regime that does not have a great many and exceedingly great sins attached to it. For they are all tainted with tyranny, unwisdom, carelessness, with all the evil lusts of honor, unchastity, revenge, avarice, so that inevitably the one who rules must do wrong to many people. Therefore the decree was given that *mau* should pray for the authorities [1 Tim. 2, 1. f.], because it is impossible that they rule without infirmity. Hence the philosophers also debate whether empires can be ruled without injustice, whether it is more tolerable if a government is just or unjust. But Plato and Cicero conclude that empires cannot be ruled without injustice and lies.

But in the kingdom of Christ there is no infirmity at all, there is no injustice, no unrighteousness is tolerated, not even in a dot; but this unrighteousness takes place in the kingdoms of the world, not by dots, but in great masses. For there are seen immense seas and monsters of iniquity, which cannot be prevented, even by those who rule well. For David was a holy king and ruled with God's assistance and favor, as Peter testifies in Acts [Cap. 13, 22.] that he ruled the kingdom according to God's will, and in the Books of Kings [1 Sam. 13, 14. 1 Kings 14, 8. Acts 13, 22.] God says: "I have found the man who shall do all my will." And yet he wronged many, like the poor orphan Mephibosheth [2 Sam. 16, 4. 19, 29. likewise Uriah, whom he ordered to be killed [2 Sam. 11, 15.] so that he could take his wife. And to say it briefly, it is impossible that those who are in government should not sin; neither can they do justice to all. The cause of this is that the greatness of the task (*negotii*) and the wickedness of the devil are too strong for their powers. It is enough, however, if they do not sin deliberately and willfully, but have the will to administer their magisterial office well. But what happens by chance differently than they would like, that is wiped out as it were with a sponge and eradicated by the forgiveness of sins. For who else would want to be used to govern a community? But we are commanded in the holy scriptures to forget and cover the sins of the rulers, and we are forbidden to see these splinters in the eyes of the rulers.

And what wonder is it that this happens to the civil authorities; we, the servants of the Word, also encounter the same. For there is none among us who could administer his office without many infirmities. Since the most praiseworthy kings of the holy people of God could not have presided over the government without sin, as David, Hezekiah and others, it is not possible that there should be anyone who would do his duty everywhere who would not

He should at times do wrong to those who have done nothing wrong, that he should not kill, rob, and rage, and should not at times display the virtues of tyrants, that he should show kindness and benevolence to the people, as Julius Caesar and others did, who were able to rage and yet, by a peculiar art, to win the hearts of the people.

This is the sum of it, that all other kings are to some extent tyrants and do not have a straight scepter; their government is not without infirmities and misdeeds and tyranny, as we see in the best kings, David and others. But Christ alone has a straight scepter in his kingdom. Why is that? Because our King has the Word of God, which is pure even to the smallest tittle (*puncto mathematico*). But you know that Aristotle in his ethics compares the moral things with the physical point, and not with the mathematical. A jurist who speaks law does not hit the mathematical point or the invisible; it is enough that he has hit the circumference, and the closer to the center, the better; "the 1) purpose he does not hit, is enough that he does not even overshoot the [target]." For in things that concern right and wrong (in *materia morali*), one must set the point two steps large, but the circumference as large as, say, a city. If one does this, one will not entirely lack the goal. For nowhere are there such laws that are without defect, and nowhere can one find such a king who ruled without injustice. But it is enough that the laws and the kings strive to hit the target, so that they do not overshoot it.

Therefore, the study of law is endless, because it strives for the physical and divisible point. Therefore it is necessary that many books of it must arise. For when any law has been given, immediately some exception presents itself, which is followed by ten others, so that they are in such a way extended into the

The laws cannot be brought to the mathematical and indivisible point. For cases and circumstances always arise which make the laws defective or change them. Therefore civil justice and civil laws are in themselves defective, even if men obey them. For reason cannot so comprehend the diversity of all cases that may occur that it should not be necessary to change the law. Therefore they profess with one mouth that moderation according to equity (*epiikian*) must be applied to the laws, "that they must be mended and lapped, and that they must be struck with oars," 2) so that the laws and civil justice are in truth, as it were, like a beggar's cloak, sewn together from various rags, which must afterwards be changed and improved, added to and taken away from, because of the diversity of cases (*negotiorum*).

Therefore, when the dominions and kingdoms of the world are compared in this play with the kingdom of Christ, they are nothing at all. Therefore, among the things to be praised above all, he also places this: "Your scepter is a straight scepter." For Christ's kingdom admits of no infirmity, and that for a twofold reason. First, because of the nature of the divine law, because we suffer our sins to be judged and punished. For though Christ tolerates sins in our lives, he does not tolerate them in law and doctrine; but the law is wholly pure, and kills sin altogether, leaving also nothing of circumstance or accident (*accidentium*), as it is said in Revelation 21:27, that nothing unclean shall enter into this Jerusalem. Secondly, because of the nature of our Head and King Christ, in whom we believe. For as far as Christ is concerned, there is nothing defective in us, but as far as we are concerned, we are wholly unclean and full of evil desire, fear of death and despair. But Christ is not of this nature, because of him it is written [Isa. 53:9, 1 Pet. 2:22], "There is no deceit found in his mouth." Therefore, if we believe in him, we will be

1) Erlanger: "the". - Purpose (purposes) - the center of the disc.

2) "zun Oertern einschlägen" - to dig for ore veins.

For his sake we are counted as perfectly (absolute) righteous in faith. Then, after the death of this flesh, we will attain the mathematical point of righteousness in that life and have in ourselves this perfect righteousness, which we now have, believing in Christ, only reckoned by the merit of Christ. But then, when this will be revealed in the life to come, all the tyranny of death will be over, so that no fear, no anxiety can cling to us any longer, but everything will be completely safe and sweet. But in this life we have these things under the shadow and covering of the wings of the Sun of righteousness [Mal. 4:2], and are righteous only by faith for His sake; but then shall we also be righteous in ourselves in truth.

Therefore, this is a straight scepter, because the teaching of Christ and the laws of this King are completely straight and pure, namely that we should believe in Christ and love God and our neighbor. There is no fault in this law, but in us, because we do not believe enough, do not love enough, are not strong enough in tribulation: and yet, because we are under this shadow [Ps. 17:8] of Christ, who loves God and man purely, we enjoy his benefits and are considered holy even in this life. First, there is no defect in the law, no crookedness in the scepter. For the word is pure, which promises grace and teaches to love God. This is that the scepter is straight. Secondly, there is also no fault in us, firstly, as far as our head is concerned, for Christ blots out our sins; secondly, as far as the life to come is concerned, in which the righteousness we now believe will be revealed. This is what the prophet sings about and praises in this passage, preferring this One King above all others, whether it be David or Solomon or Hezekiah. For they cannot rule their kingdoms without foolishness and conspicuous error. Thus Hezekiah foolishly boasts [2 Kings 20:3], "Oh, Lord, remember that I have walked faithfully before thee." In a foolish way he also boasts before the messengers of the king of Babylon [Isa. 39, 1. ff.]. Thus Josiah is killed because of an error [2 Chron. 35, 21. ff.]. In short, all, even the best kings

From the beginning of the world, their kingdoms have not ruled without great error and injustice.

But this is so that you may understand that the government of the world cannot be administered without sin. This is not known to some frenzied preachers and the rabble, who are easily at hand to show up the faults of princes and kings. But this is also a peculiar deception of Satan, that we see the infirmities of princes so easily and pay attention to them. Some peasant who has lived like a swine for twenty years or more, and has never paid attention to any sin of his, shows great eloquence at the slightest sin of his prince, while in the meantime he devours whole seas and forests of his own sins. Therefore, you who will one day either enter the worldly government or preside over the churches, should be prepared to say: Dear Lord God, we also have the name that we govern, and, as it is said in the common proverb, swim like horse dung among the apples, 1) when our government is compared with this straight scepter. For it is not possible to guard against all errors.

When you see these faults, do not learn to be nonsensical with the mob, but learn to excuse them (mitigare), to bear them patiently and to give them credit, especially when those who are in high places are not evil men, who do not sin with will, but like to be careful in all things, and yet they do not succeed. These we must not attack with hostility, for that would be to teach seditiously and, as Peter [2 Ep. 2, 10.] says, to blaspheme the majesties. Yes, if you can close your eyes to your infirmities and cover them up, why do you not also close your eyes to their infirmities, especially since you owe this according to God's commandment? Why do you not rather say: Of Christ's kingdom it is said: "Your scepter is a straight scepter", this is the privilege of this kingdom, which other kingdoms do not have; therefore patience is necessary in the kingdoms of the world and in the worldly regiment.

1) Xt)8 POINÄ natarnus - We apples swim, said the horse manure, as he swam among the apples.

Nebuchadnezzar was undoubtedly a good and understanding man, but see how cruelly he makes men throw themselves to the lions! Thus Alexander, with great activity, accomplished the greatest deeds, but how did he behave toward his friends? Likewise Augustus. In short, search through all the histories, and you will see that some infirmity has been found in all of them; there is not one among them who has not often and dangerously given offense. And what wonder is it that men stumble in the government of a commonwealth, since there is no greater work in this civil life than this? Only look rightly at your house, or if you have none, take a wife and govern your house, and see if your wife, children, servants and maids do all things as you have quite rightly commanded to be done?

Therefore, only of Christ's kingdom is it said, "Thy scepter is a straight scepter." In the case of all others who are in worldly government, if they sin, those sins are taken away by the forgiveness of sins which we ask for in the holy Lord's Prayer. But though the Church has in herself wrinkles and spots, yet she is holy and without a spot in her head [Eph. 5:26 ff]. For Christ is without spot; he therefore that believeth on him is without spot also, but by faith. Then the law is also pure, the promise is pure; furthermore, we are also partly pure. Thus the scepter is straight everywhere, and the people of Christ are in no way wronged, because they are ruled by the pure word. But you should learn this diligently, that you look at both the church and the secular government according to their outward appearance, so that they are not completely pure, and you must also put on such an attitude that one must tolerate infirmities in the household, in the secular government and in the church. But he who does not want to thnn, must of course go to another world. For he is an inexperienced, vain, rustic man who neither knows nor has seen anything. If he were allowed to govern what he criticizes in others, he would govern it no more blissfully than Phaeton governed the sun, "for whom the sun could go nowhere right.

He rebuked his father's government; now that he has been admitted to the government, he would have almost brought everything to ruin. The same thing is done by those who are so inclined to judge others, as some false brethren have done among us, who are the pure asses, who understand nothing but to teach how things should be attacked, "how things should be done. But this is a minor art, which I also understand, and better than they. But to do right what is rightly commanded, to this truly belongs art. But there we usually experience that we become disgraced. Those asses don't know that, that's why they are so skilled in discrediting other people's actions.

But when judging the church, one must distinguish between this life and the life to come, and when judging the worldly regime, one must separate the laws and the life (mores), both of which are deficient, from this kingdom of Christ, which has a straight scepter. There it is enough to achieve only something, since, as he says, one cannot get any further; "one does as much as one can, but that one should make it all pure, nothing comes of it, like the young rulers who think they want to hit eleven pins, since there are only nine of them on the course". In Erfurt, I have seen some ruling in such a way that they were hanged and their heads cut off because they presumed to rule according to their thoughts (speculative) and did not know that the devil was in the world. But I say all this against the inflammatory opinions of frenzied people who know nothing but to reform and rebuke other people (as they call it). Such was Absalom, who belittled his father and stood daily by the way of the gate [2 Sam. 15, 2. ff.] I hear that your cause is bad and right, if only you had a just judge. But in my father's court nothing is done properly; I should be king. But how he succeeded, the exit has taught.

But those who want to restore a fallen person in authority should do so first by prayer to God, then by humble counsel, not with malicious gossip and secret talk in corners among rebellious people, but freely and openly. In this way, those who are in the office of the word-

They are to punish the rulers, but with modesty, so that it is done without rioting, and that they teach the people that the worldly government cannot be held or administered without sins, just as the household cannot be administered without sins; but these sins would be covered afterwards by the forgiveness of sins. But in the church, as far as the Word is concerned, there is no forgiveness of sins, but this is the mathematical point and the highest purity. For the Word is so blameless that not even the smallest letter has a defect in the Law and in the divine promises. Therefore, we must not yield to any sect, even in One Bag of Scripture, however much they may cry and slander that we injure love by holding the words so closely. For the beginning of all love is this, that the straight scepter remain. If this cannot be obtained in any other way, love must be broken, even if there is something greater, so that only the word remains pure. But if this purity of the word and the straight scepter remain standing, then I will gladly bear in love the life and infirmities of the brother. Therefore the worldly government and the church, the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of the world, must be carefully distinguished, and this distinction cannot be sufficiently learned, namely, that in the worldly government we bear everything with patience and excuse it with complacency, and yet strive, as far as it can be done, that civil justice may be exercised. If this does not succeed everywhere, we should say: "To Christ alone belongs this glory, that his scepter is straight, but not to other kingdoms.

The meaning is therefore this: "Your scepter is a straight scepter", that is, You rule everything in a righteous way, because You rule through the Word, which must be the highest straightness and righteousness. Therefore, all our sins here are condemned to the very last jot, but still condemned in such a way that God intends to cleanse them completely through the forgiveness of sins and finally eradicate them through death, for Christ's sake. If I look at Him in faith as having taken away all my sins through His death, then God also declares

I am righteous and pure for the sake of my head. For the sake of Christ, who is pure in the purest way. So then the church is also pure, even though it is in itself full of sins. If then thou seest other things, namely, that the evil desires are hot, faintheartedness, sadness, carelessness in word, then thou shalt say: The church is unclean in itself, as far as the old man is concerned, but it is cleansed by the scepter; this scepter kills the old man daily. Therefore, even if we die and are buried and burned with fire on the last day, we will rise pure, just as our scepter is pure. Now we are not yet, but are made so, and, as the Aristotelians speak, we are saints in becoming (in fieri sancti), but not yet saints in becoming (in facto esse). But now he will interpret this scepter even further according to his usage.

V. 8. You love righteousness and hate ungodliness.

This is the custom of the scepter. But even this cannot be found in the scepter of the world. For there is the law, which says, "Require them to come in" [Luc. 14:23]. It is indeed written [Ps. 2, 10. f.]: Love righteousness, ye judges of the earth, but this is not found perfect in any heart, not even among Christians, for there remains in us from Adam the verse opposite to this, namely: Thou hateest righteousness, and lovest ungodliness. And yet, if we are Christians, we too are called lovers of righteousness, because we have begun to love him piecemeal; but yet much more, indeed, quite actually because we believe in him who in truth loves righteousness, and in truth hates ungodliness. We have come this far. But apart from Christ there is nothing but loving unrighteousness and not hating ungodliness. For even in the heart of the godly there remains distrust, terror and fear of death, judgment and the wrath of God; pure faith is not there, which in truth trusts in Christ; although it is in the process of becoming, it is not yet in the process of becoming.

But much more this, that the love for the

The kingdom of God has seen that righteousness and hatred of ungodliness are not there when we go out into the common life of men. Show me any king who loves justice. For all of them are driven to the administration of justice either by ambition or by some other futile cause; indeed, they usually persecute the righteous, and keep company with the wicked and favor them, so that the courts of princes might in truth be called the devil's chair and throne, where there are almost as many devils as courtiers. Now this is called loving righteousness. But they are held more out of necessity than out of good will, and those are very rare who would be kings for the sake of righteousness itself; but all love the ungodly and hate righteousness. But in Christ's kingdom, there one loves justice completely.

But the word "righteousness" must be taken in a general way, so that righteousness is believing in Jesus Christ and loving God and one's neighbor, that is, that one understands it at the same time from the righteousness of faith and works, serving God and one's neighbor in stewardship and in worldly government and in all the other duties that God commands. This righteousness, both that of faith and that of works, is governed by the scepter, and he loves it, "he has air to it." we all hate them by nature, because I would rather have a gracious GOtt without faith, by my merit, and I often dispute with myself about this matter, because it seems exceedingly hard to me to be so attached to invisible things and to esteem them so great, that I should be happy and comforted in them, even though I do not see or hear them, yes, even though they are nothing at all according to reason, and that I should let myself be killed and leave everything, just so that I may have Christ. But he who has not experienced this thinks that it is easy to believe. But I often grumble against this righteousness and love ungodly things, that is, I do not believe that I am pleasing to God by grace, without any work that I have done, and I have a horror of God's judgment, I grumble and am impatient when God chastises me; so I love what is repugnant to God. But this

Christ does not do this, but loved righteousness with a pure love, and did all this for us, and now that he is seated in his kingdom, he is anxious to instill in us hatred for the ungodly, so that we may be righteous according to his example. In the meantime, this righteousness is implanted daily through the Word, and God sustains us and considers us to be people who love righteousness for the sake of Christ.

So this is also a new difference in which the kingdom of Christ differs from the kingdoms of the world, where the hatred of righteousness takes place even when everything is at its best. But in the kingdom of Christ there is true love of righteousness, because the word is pure, which suffers no jesting; but teaches the very pure faith, and reminds one to flee from vice. Therefore the doctrine leaves not one little stick [of infirmity], which we ought not to punish and condemn. But this the civil laws and courts do not do, but tolerate enormous beams of sins and infirmities. But in our doctrine nothing goes unpunished, and though we condone what we punish, yet we admonish, Thou doest wickedly, that thou troubleest thyself, and meanwhile forgettest Christ; yet will I bear thy infirmities. Although I tolerate sins in this way, I do not justify them, but improve them, and this is proper to the kingdom of Christ.

Therefore, wherever the word is, Christ leads the matter in such a way that he hates the ungodly being, as he hated it then when he lived among the Jews. For we see how he everywhere attacks the Pharisees out of love for righteousness and hatred for the ungodly being, otherwise they would not have handed him over to Caiaphas. For the more holy and pure they want to be, the more he makes them unclean and shameful by punishing their sins, which they did not see, because he loves righteousness and cannot stand the ungodly nature with which they stained all their works. But this he does until they say: "You are a Samaritan and have the devil", and procure that he is put on the cross. So also we, when we suffered the abomination of the Pabst, and the thievery of the

If we had the courage of the peasants and the courage of the nobles, they would love us; but because we punish everything freely, they hate us bitterly and are after our lives.

Therefore your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness, more than your companions.

This is added because of necessity. For when we begin to love righteousness, Satan is there, persecuting us in many ways with sword, fire, water, and all kinds of tortures, and in truth drenching us with vinegar and gall, like Christ on the cross. Moreover, the world also hates and persecutes us to the utmost because we punish them for sin. If we were to turn a blind eye to its sins, it would love us, as Christ says: "If you were of the world, the world would love you; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you," and because you persist in punishing the vices of men, you shall have this as a reward, that the world persecutes you, watering you with gall and vinegar, until it finally crucifies you. But what does God do about it? He will anoint you with the oil of gladness, that is, he will comfort you afterward ¹⁾ and will raise you up against the world and all dangers. Many other passages are of the same kind, as Ps. 16, 11. [Vulg.]: "Thou wilt fill me with joy with thy countenance," and Ps. 8, 6.: "With honor and adornment thou wilt crown him." There he indicates that eternal glory is recompensed to Christ for the cross which he endured out of love for righteousness and because of hatred for the ungodly being. It is therefore a very comforting verse that we should be sure that our suffering will be followed by glory. For in such a way Peter also connects these two pieces, 1 Pet. 1, 11.: "The Spirit of Christ hath testified the sufferings before, which are in Christ, and the glory after." But though He instills joy in our hearts even at this time, yet when it shall be revealed, we shall be completely filled with joy.

It is a Hebrew way of speaking that he calls it "oil of gladness." For this was a

¹⁾ üino is in the Erlanger, but is missing in the Wittenberger and in the Jenaer.

It was the custom of this people to dress more gloriously on feast days and also to anoint themselves, as Christ indicates Matth. 6, 16. f.: "When you fast, you shall not look sour, as the hypocrites do, but anoint your head and wash your face" 2c. This is not the custom with us nowadays; but they used to anoint themselves at the time of joy, and called it a balm of feast, of gladness, of glory. But we do not have balsamic oil with which the body is anointed, but the oil of the Holy Spirit, which He pours out on our hearts, and also aligns us in this life. Thus we read in the Gospel that Christ once rejoiced in spirit [Luc. 10:21] and was glad. That was the anointing of the Holy Spirit, of which he says here. But after this life he was anointed in such a way that he can never be grieved for eternity.

I do not disapprove of the translation: "more than your companions" (*prae consortibus*) to indicate a preference, although it can also be translated: for the sake of your companions (*propter consortes tuos*). Whichever you take, however, it is a great comfort that the prophet says that Christ was thus translated into joy and glory, that he might have companions, so that the very scepter might not belong to him alone, but that he might have companions and associates who would share in this oil and joy. Therefore, it must be noted that all that Christ has is common and is shared with his companions who believe in him. They have the same love of righteousness, the same hatred of the ungodly, the same oil of joy, but yet in such a way that we do not transfer anything to Christ, but that we receive everything from him, as the text says [John 1:16]: "Of his fullness we have all received." In such a way, therefore, is this Head [Christ] instituted, that it is necessary that he should have members and fellows, for whose sake he is such, and is thus described. But this is our comfort, that we may not think that Christ is an idle king, who was raised and glorified only for his own sake, but that we may learn that he is the fountain of righteousness, and the head of truth, of life, and of all goods, and the fountain in such a way that he may give to them the

Life to those who are destined to die, and righteousness to those who are laden with sins 2c. Therefore the text says: "more than your companions" or: for the sake of your companions, that is, those who belong to him.

Therefore, here is a glorious painting of our King JEsu Christ, that he sits on the throne to do justice, to exercise and sanctify Christians, so that they may grow more and more in faith and righteousness of works day by day, so that they may be more cleansed from sins, so that evil desire may be lessened, sadness diminished, despair cease 2c., and all this by the scepter, as he expressly added, because the scribes ridicule the oral word and the preaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. This you do not do, but follow the reputation of the Holy Spirit, who calls the word with a glorious title "a straight scepter". For it is the standard and panier which he has set up among the Gentiles. For Christ did not want to be visibly seized by us. Therefore he has given his scepter, which we are to take heed to, which we are to hear, through which the Holy Spirit works powerfully. If we have this scepter, we have enough, because he does not want to give anything by visible splendor and outward appearance of the kingdom, but offers his scepter, through which he communicates all his goods to us. Now he goes on to other descriptions of the person.

V. 9. Your garments are vain myrrh, aloes and kezia, when you come out of the ivory palaces, in your beautiful splendor.

I have often said that it is a very worldly description of the king, how he fights against his enemies and conquers, after that how he judges and administers his justice at home to his own, killing the flesh and giving life to the spirit, and works that they grow in his knowledge from day to day, as Peter [2 Ep. 3, 18] says. For this doctrine is not learned all at once, nor can it be grasped by *speculative* thought, but it must be learned by daily practice in the midst of the trials of the world,

of the devil, of the flesh, in despair, in mistrust and countless other horrible things, and without these exercises it cannot be held fast. Therefore, foolish people who, after reading a page or two of the Scriptures and hearing a sermon or two, think that they have learned this doctrine at once, while they see that this cannot happen in other lesser arts, that we become masters at once; but much less can it happen in this greatest of all doctrines, that we trust in God with all our hearts and despise all the dangers of the world, death and the devil. This cannot be learned in one day, but requires experience (*usus*) and a great deal of practice and a special gift from God. Now, however, the prophet will also add something about the clothing and the splendor at home.

The Hebrew text here is somewhat different [from that of the Vulgate, which reads, *Myrrha et gutta et casia a vestimentis tuis, a domibus eburneis*], namely, "Myrrh and aloes and kezia are all thy garments when thou comest forth from the ivory palaces." But you see that the prophet continues in this image of a temporal or worldly king. For in the world it happens in such a way, and indeed necessarily, that the kings and princes shine before the common people with special ceremonies, splendor and clothes, and rightly so, because they must dress more splendidly to distinguish themselves from the other classes. This figurative speech is very useful and necessary for us, because we can see the opposite before our eyes. Therefore it is necessary that this kingdom be painted and adorned by the Holy Spirit with such splendor in figurative speech, so that faith can stand, even though it looks quite different. For if you consult your senses, they will judge just the opposite. For the church is not a stench of life in the world, but a stench of death to death and shame. There is no light, but cross, weakness, despair; inward trembling, outward the sword. This is the adornment, this is the form of the church, if you look at it according to the outward appearance, namely a form of death and hell; there-

The form of the world is a pleasure garden of glory and joy. Then also the reputation of the church is this, that its members are destroyers and corrupters of the worldly regime and of all respectable life, rebels, heretics, children of the devil, who were sent into this world from the midst of hell.

Against this abominable appearance and these frightful aversions, this praise of the Holy Spirit is needed, that the church may be fragrant with myrrh and aloes and kezia, because it is blasphemed and blasphemed beyond measure, and all that is the church is cursed. Therefore, this verse is extraordinarily spiritual in that it says, "All your garments are myrrh" 2c. But these fragrances (aromata) are unknown to us. Therefore, I do not know if they are translated correctly by us, but it is certain that it is something of the kind that serves to preserve the clothes and to make the clothes fragrant. In any case, we have only myrrh. However, the first myrrh, which flows out by itself without any cuts being made in the tree, is called myrrh oil (stacten); this has an extraordinary power against rot. According to it, mau is also used to make incisions in the trees. About the aloe one doubts, because in all languages the words, which designate things (vocabula rerum), are almost lost. But about the Kezia I cannot say anything for sure; they say that it is the Cassia, but it is unknown to us. Therefore, it is sufficient to maintain in general that they are spicy things (aromata) that serve to anoint the body and the clothes, as well as the balsam, which is omitted here, about which I wonder.

This is the summa: When the kings walk along in splendor, they have this splendor, and rightly so, that they step along, dressed in delicious and fragrant clothes, which are doused with the most precious ointment, as with us some use rose or lavender water. But those regions have an abundance of the best perfumes, as in Moses [Ex. 30, 22. ff.] commanded to make the anointing oil, likewise of the incense, which they were to use in the temple, and it was forbidden to make it for priests.

vate use. But one anointed with this anointing oil the garments of the priests, as it is said Ps. 133, 2.: "Like the delicious balsam that flows down into his garment." Because in our way we have not this custom, when we hear the word ointment we think of the ointments of the surgeons of wounds, but it denotes the very noblest liquids, as the balsam is, and with us the rose water, the spikenard water 2c., which they used on solemn occasions, so that wherever the high priest went, he filled everything with the sweetest odor; as we read of Christ, when the woman poured the precious nard on his head, that the whole house was filled with the exceedingly sweet odor of the ointment, John 12:3. And this was generally the custom of all the Orient, that they used ointments at ceremonies and festivities, with which they poured the garments and utensils. We are more fond of gold and silk ornaments, so we have to pay attention to their customs. The sum of this passage is that the King Christ should go forth in his native splendor, doused with the noblest ointments, so that wherever he goes, he may fill everything with the sweetest odor.

When you step out of the ivory palaces, in your beautiful splendor.

This is the description of a royal splendor, where one sees the crown, shining clothes and the exceedingly lovely and beautiful dwellings made of ivory. Of the same kind, he says, is the splendor of our King Christ. But here faith is required, without which one cannot hold that Christ's kingdom is like this. Therefore, let us apply the spiritual interpretation of the worldly splendor, the fragrance and the palaces.

"Garments" in Scripture mean the adornment of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that we are clothed with various gifts, as 1 Cor. 12:8 and Rom. 12:6 are written, "To one is given by the Spirit to speak wisdom," to others another gift. For the gifts and powers are very different, but "it is One Spirit," as Paul [1 Cor. 12, 4.] clearly teaches. But these gifts occur

then come forth after we are baptized and washed from our sins through justifying faith. Then God adorns His bride and puts on her these garments, that is, faith is followed by these gifts of teaching, praying, comforting, governing, presiding and other things that pertain to the Church.

These gifts spread the most delicious odor, that is, the Christians become famous, in such a way that the neighboring nations hear this wisdom and admire this light of truth and rejoice, as Paul was a savor of life to the godly [2 Cor. 2, 15. f.]. For to those to whom he was a savor of death, we are not to be concerned. For one must teach and judge, not according to what the world judges, but according to God. What is it to me, therefore, that the peasants and nobles despise me and reproach our gifts? The time will come when they, too, will be considered insolent. For we should not depend on the judgment of the world or of the flesh, nor even on the judgment of our hearts about us, but speak thus: If I am an unworthy sinner, as my heart reproaches me, I will not believe my heart in this matter. For this matter does not depend on my will or judgment at all, but on the fact that Jesus Christ is King. I have his baptism, I believe in him, and I want to live and die in him. But what happens, all happens through his word, not through my heart, in which these high goods are low and are not respected, and before the children of men they are heretical. But I do not care what the world says, but what the Christians, what the church, what the angels, what God Himself says about me, and I respect a Christian's testimony that my teaching and also my life is praiseworthy, higher than if four worlds invent blasphemies against me. For reason also judges that it is honor and virtue to be hated by the wicked, but praise if one pleases the good. For there is no greater insult than when a wicked man praises me.

Therefore, it is not necessary to look at what the world or even our conscience says about us.

But what God, the angels and his saints judge of me, there is the right fragrance and honor. Now it is certain (no matter how much the world may rage), first of all, that I have been baptized, and secondly, that I also have the gospel; here one hears the voice of the church. I also see that life follows this word as well as possible, although this following is not perfect. I also hear that the brethren can comfort, judge all doctrine, life, morals, and everything that is only in the world. Neither a jurist, nor a physician, nor a philosopher (artista), nor any wise man can do this, that he can judge about his state (*de suo vitae heuere*), how it is before God, but only a Christian can certainly conclude: This life pleases God, that one does not. This wisdom is such a great treasure that nothing can be found that is equal to it in value, and even if this doctrine has no other good than that it makes consciences certain that the authorities and lawyers and other states are pleasing to God (*in bono statu*), nevertheless the goods of the world could not pay for this one good deed. For before this doctrine of ours came into being, there was no one who could have asserted with certainty that his estate and worldly government were pleasing to God. What, therefore, is the wisdom of the world, since it does not even know how to judge of itself what it is? But this is the least virtue of the word, that one knows that this state pleases God, that one does not; and yet it has an exceedingly great fragrance. But kings and princes enjoy it for their own benefit, and turn against the gospel, as lawyers do. It will happen, however, that just as they give thanks to God for this benefit, so they will also receive the right reward for this ingratitude.

But the benefits are even greater, that with this teaching one can raise consciences and comfort a frightened person. This benefit is greater than the possession of ten kingdoms. For these cannot remove a conscience even for a moment from the peril of a single venial sin, to say nothing of mortal sins.

But a Christian is able to do this, who can certainly assure that this pleases God, if we believe that he forgives us our sins by grace through Christ for nothing. Only a Christian can teach about the forgiveness of sins, about the promise of eternal life, about the closing of hell, about the opening of heaven, about the exchange of death for life, because he has the word of God from which all this comes. But all this is disregarded because it is frequent and abundant, so that all can easily repeat the words, which is the very worst. For this is the reason that the knowledge of Christ is obscured, and the esteem and preciousness of this doctrine is lost, and the mercy and kindness of Christ are made small in our hearts, so that we also forget the benefits we have through Christ and the evils from which we are saved.

But God commands the Jews that they should not forget the good and the evil. For if one forgets evil, one also no longer remembers the good deeds. This is how it is now: because we have forgotten in how great a hell (that I say so) we have lived under the papacy, the good deeds of the Gospel are obscured in our eyes, and we do not see how great it is to firmly establish even a tortured conscience, to comfort, to instruct, to change death into life, sin into righteousness, the devil into God. This good we neglect, but the Holy Spirit would like us to esteem it great. Therefore he praises the fragrance of the garments of Christ, that his garments give off the smell of life, so that everyone who hears the gospel may receive true comfort in his heart; and when there is a sorrowful conscience, wrestling with sin and death, what can it hear more sweetly than of this smell of garments, what more pleasant than that you may hear a brother directing and comforting you swiftly and firmly? But those who are sure do not care, for them this is a smell to death, what for others is a smell to life.

Thus, St. Paul and the other apostles are also a part of this garment, spreading the smell over the whole earth, by which the godly hearts are refreshed. The

They are angry at it and say that it is the devil's dung, just as our opponents accuse our teaching of not producing anything good, but of being the devil's fiefdom. So the Jews said of Paul, "What good thing does he preach? Certainly that one should not keep the law. And, Apost. 24, 5: "We have found this man harmful, and the sedition arouses all the Jews on the whole face of the earth." So they also lied that the apostles were seditious, as happens to us today, and called them destroyers of the worldly regime and kingdoms, and people who gave free permission for all evil. What shall we do? We must suffer it, and they will be prophets unto themselves, that we are in truth to them disturbers and corrupters of kingdoms, not with the deed (effective), but because the opposite of that which they intend shall come to pass (per ἀντιπαρίστασ'). For because they persecute the word which we teach, it shall come to pass, that they shall run, and bring judgment upon themselves, that they shall perish, as it happened also unto the Jews with Christ. For they also prophesied the same thing as our adversaries today, John 11:48: "If we leave him, the Romans will come (says Caiaphas) and take our land and people." Therefore they want to prevent this and crucify Christ. But when Christ was crucified, and they thought that they had established the kingdom, the Romans came and put an end to the city and the people.

So they now think of us: if we are removed from the way, then Germany will have peace; and precisely through that, by which they want to occur their ruin, the opposite will happen, that they will perish. For today we are the ones who preserve the kingdoms, dominions, laws, and everything that is good created by God, we who teach the Word of God preserve and preserve. There is no one who has so gloriously adorned the marital state and the authorities as we have. This they see and must confess against their will, and yet they call us destroyers. Therefore it will happen that we will be destroyers for them in truth and destroyers of all things, and like Christ the kingdom of the Jews, Paul the kingdom of the Romans, the kingdom of the Jews will be destroyed.

we will overthrow Germany and the pope. Because they call the word that sustains all these things a word of disturbance, therefore Christ says, "Be it done to you as you say. For because thou thinkest that I am such, I will prove to be such. This will not be through my fault or the word's fault, but through your raging and stubbornness, which will disturb you.

Therefore, we should not be moved by them defiling with blasphemies and false accusations our exceedingly good gifts and the divine wisdom from which we have blessedness and peace. For this cannot but have an evil smell in the sight of the world, but in the sight of us who believe, it is like a garment soaked with myrrh and balsam. To us it is the sweetest smell, the most pleasant in the whole world, and the world also feels it and enjoys it, although it condemns it. The princes, who are against us, would not subject themselves to what they dare to do today, if they had not learned from us, and if we had not adorned the authorities so splendidly. And truly, Muenzer, the Anabaptists and the Sacramentarians would already have aroused greater unrest, and one would not have been able to resist them if the word had not resisted them.

All the protection both for religion against heretics and for the secular government against rebels comes from the word that sustains all these things. If then they will not cease their iniquities and their blasphemies, and continue to trample under foot Him who sustains them, when the Word is gone, their dominion will not last as it did to the Jews. As long as Christ and Paul lived, whom they called destroyers of Judaism, it was well with them; but when these were taken out of the way, Vespasianus and the Romans came as saviors and preservers of Judaism; these saved them, as we still see today. Our adversaries also want to have such saviors, and they will be granted to them. This is what the prophet says in this passage, that Christ has an exceedingly good odor, but only

with the godly. For he speaks of the gifts of Christ, which he pours out on the whole church through the Holy Spirit. For the distribution of the gifts takes place through the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit is One.

When you step out of the ivory palaces.

This is also a beautiful figurative speech and easy to understand. He only wants to open our spiritual eyes, that we should look at the church like the clothes, because according to the appearance nothing is less, nothing is more despicable. Some poor shepherd of souls is the most despised person, so much so that there is no peasant who does not think that he is, as it were, dung that he can trample underfoot, as they do. Against this low esteem the Holy Spirit fortifies us and teaches us that we should judge and speak of them differently than the world is wont to do: If he has the word of God, if he teaches Christ, then he is a noble and precious stone, he is like a diamond or an emerald in the eyes of God, because the word of God is an inestimable gift, which God values and holds in such high esteem that he regards heaven and earth, the sun, moon and stars as nothing compared to the word. For through this word everything was created and everything will be created.

Therefore, a priest who has God's word is more gloriously adorned than the sun and the stars, as Daniel also says, Cap. 12, 3: "Those who point many to righteousness will shine like the stars." This is true in the eyes of God, and of holy angels, and of holy men. And St. John the Baptist, Peter and Paul say that he is more beautiful than all the stars; but the world despises him as a useless man. Here one must open the spiritual eye and speak to such despisers: You are a sow. If you eat me, I am eaten. But nevertheless, because I believe in Jesus Christ, I have one who will place me in glory. For my glory and my garments are in the Lord, who is called Christ. Therefore, if you despise me and do not consider me worthy to look at, so be it, I do not care; it is more pleasing to me if the

The angel Gabriel looks at me for a moment with a joyful face, as if ten kings turned their eyes on me and kissed me. But now, not only Gabriel and the other angels look at me as a precious stone, because I teach the word of God, but they also praise me and marvel at me; that is enough for me.

This is what he calls ivory palaces. For the Holy Spirit chooses the name of an exceedingly delicious substance. For ivory is known to be solid, white and durable. Therefore, buildings made of ivory are undoubtedly the most beautiful and excellent. However, ivory buildings are often mentioned elsewhere. Now, even if it has not been ivory through and through, it has been another precious material, so that in a figurative speech it is called an ivory house. So he says: Our King Christ has palaces which are not made of clay, wood and straw, as they are built among us, but of ivory. But who is he who should believe that the church at Wittenberg, Kemberg, and others, where baptism and the Word are, is an ivory palace in the eyes of God? And yet it is in truth so, because baptism is not in vain; so also neither the Word, nor the government of the church, nor the consolation of the afflicted is something void. Now, if you were to look at the outward appearance, what can you see here in Wittenberg that is so beautiful? You see nothing splendid about the church, the city is really made of clay, and yet it is an ivory palace of Christ. So also the smallest village, in which there is a priest and some believers, is an ivory palace. But to see it, other than carnal eyes are needed. For this preciousness is not estimated according to the outward appearance or the judgment of the five senses and reason, not according to the laws, not according to the arts or philosophy, but according to the word of God, that there is the Word, baptism, the Lord's Supper, God's government, consolation of consciences, fear of God, trust in God, waiting on God, following Christ 2c. These things must be looked at; if you see them anywhere, do not let the appearance or anything

But do not move anything else, but make the conclusion par excellence: Here is Christ in ivory palaces, here Christ dwells. Although this kingdom is nothing in appearance, it is the most beautiful in the eyes of God.

Therefore, all these figurative things are written by the Holy Spirit for this reason, that He may open our spiritual eyes against the aversions of the Church, so that we may learn to look at our gifts and esteem them highly. For to this end the Holy Spirit is given, "that we may know the things which are given us of God," 1 Cor. 2:12. For the gifts of God are there, but it is a greater gift that they should be known and discerned; as it is written of a man who came by chance to the baptism of an infant. When he heard the mighty words spoken at baptism, he marveled at their power, and said, "If I knew that I too was baptized with such words, I would never be afraid of the devil. And it is true, the gifts are there, we hear the word, we see the baptism, likewise the government of the church and the driving of the church, how it is defended against the enemies, how it overcomes the devil and remains invincible against him; these gifts are present, but good to him who recognizes them. For if I could duly esteem my baptism, my preaching ministry, and my profession in the word, as well as my works that are in Christ, then no matter how great a matter, no danger could occur that I would not despise with a strong and cheerful heart.

It is therefore a gift above all gifts to have Christ and his word. But if one also recognized this and looked at those gifts in a mirror, as it were, that would be just as if a man had been resurrected and was in paradise, and in a better life than Adam had in paradise. But the devil does not allow us to recognize this completely. Therefore, when the peasants or the nobles are so ungrateful to the word and the servants of the word, we are moved and indignant, and are in such violent emotion that we forget about our gifts, whereas we should say: "What is it about a sack full of angry princes, kings, Turkish emperors, yes.

for a sackful of devils?" What is it, if the princes are also ungracious to us, and the kings rage? What is persecution, if you see here that Christ is yours, who is the Son of God, whose word and baptism we have and see? Likewise, when you look at the fruits and effects of the Word, the consolation of consciences, the keys of Christ with which you can open heaven and shut hell? But for this you need the Holy Spirit, so that you can see these gifts, and this psalm does this by painting before our eyes the greatness of the matter and these priceless gifts. In this way, Wittenberg and all other churches are the most beautiful castles and palaces in which Christ dwells and reigns.

In your beautiful splendor.

The Hebrew text connects this piece with the previous one: When thou comest forth from the ivory palaces which make thee glad, that is, that smell and the palaces make thee glad, and delight thee and the people, but only those who have open and spiritual eyes. But according to the judgment of the world and outward appearances, the opposite is true, for there the church is called a beggar's flock, so that there is no more miserable stable than the church. Thus, in the eyes of our adversaries, no band of robbers is as evil as our Wittenberg church; if they could destroy it from the ground up, they would think they were doing God a service. Blessed, therefore, is he who recognizes it rightly. For whoever can look at the church, the pastor, the brother in such a way that he is baptized and has the gifts of the Gospel and of faith, looks at heaven and paradise. Therefore, turn your eyes to these things and learn to recognize and appreciate them; but despise everything else in comparison, so that you say, "The power of the world, gold, silver, splendor, and even life itself are nothing compared to these gifts, so that you consider what the world considers to be the greatest and most precious to be the least and most contemptible.

This, then, is this figurative speech and the prize of our king, of his wisdom, power, prosperity, happiness, victory, and all the virtues of his kingdom, and that of an eternal rei-

ches, both at the time of peace and war. Now follows almost the last part of this praise, of the queen. For it is fitting that such a king, who has such power and glory, so many palaces and riches, should also have a queen and beget children, so that he is not alone. Therefore, until the end, he will deal with the fertility and the quantity of the offspring. Therefore he gives him two queens as wives, one the church of the Jews, the other the church of the Gentiles, and describes their offspring very gloriously. And as he has hitherto beautifully equipped the king with weapons, power and splendor, so he also sets forth the queen to have sons and daughters, which is a very great gift and blessing from GOD. For barrenness was cursed under the law, and God, out of special counsel, created man in the beginning to beget children, saying [Gen. 2:18]: "It is not good that man should be alone. Thus, in the eyes of the Majesty it was considered a precious gift that the human race should multiply. Therefore, God did not create man without special counsel, like the unreasonable animals, but the Scripture says that God consulted with Himself and granted man a spouse, so that man might multiply and be blessed in childbearing.

V. 10. In your adornment go the daughters of kings; the bride stands at your right hand in the most precious gold. 1)

Thus the Hebrew text divides the verse, and it does not say *deaurato*, but: of solid and the noblest gold from Ophir. Thus he paints here the bride, the wedding and the women's room. For this refers to the wedding, that he says that the invited daughters of the kings are there, and all walk along in the king's adornment, "in the king's color", because this is what the word "adornment" means for the Hebrews. But I take "the kings' daughters" simply according to the letter, because the gospel does not only call the yeast of men, as it is 1 Cor. 1, 26. 27,

1) *Vulgata*: *Filiae regum in honore tuo. Astitit regina a dextris tuis in vestitu deaurato: circumdata varietate.*

but also the nobles and heads of the world; and although not many mighty men believe the gospel, yet not only poor and lowly people, but also some princes are called and come to faith. For not all the rich and powerful are of the devil, but God also has a portion of the princes. Therefore we take "the daughters of kings" according to the letter as the queens who are converted to this king. But the image is taken from the court of Solomon, who had in his women's room the daughters of the neighboring kings of Ammon, Moab 2c., who also finally turned his heart. For the good prince was all too familiar with them.

Now if someone likes the secret interpretation better, he may follow it, so that he calls people of very low rank queens, who have crowns on their heads, as the church is depicted in the Revelation of St. John [Cap. 5, 8.ff.], that every soul is a king's daughter, because faith in Jesus Christ is a crown. The harps in the hands are the preaching by which Christ is praised in the whole church, so that every preacher is a harpist of God [Rev. 14:2]. So they have incense, which is, prayer. For these two pieces are the chiefest in the church, preaching and prayer, which are our sacrifices and services properly due to GOD, and by which we become priests. So I could also take the queens according to spiritual interpretation, but I will not do it. I take them simply as the word reads, because kings also bow down and bend their necks under the yoke of the gospel, that I say so, although it is not a yoke, if one wants to speak actually. For many rich and noble people have adhered to Christ, even some noble women, who are often more ardent than men, like St. Anastasia, who alone seems to have had a hundred hearts. For although they are by nature the weaker sex, they sometimes do marvelous things when inflamed by the Holy Spirit. Thus Mary Magdalene had a stronger courage than Peter. Hence the meaning: Christ's kingdom will become so vast and glorious that even the daughters of kings will be converted to the faith.

In your jewelry.

In these words there is a great power, as if he wanted to say: They will leave their adornment and their honor; they will not boast of their princely clothes, but they will be clothed with new gold and new clothes, namely more heavenly and more Christian. Therefore the word "your" must be taken in the opposite sense, as if he wanted to say: not in theirs. But what are the garments of Christ? For he hath not where to lay his head, neither hath he in all the earth a space of one foot wide to be said to be his, whereon he may die, but dieth high in the air. Therefore it is another adornment than that of the world, namely the crown of faith, with which the head of Christians is adorned, as it were with the most beautiful gold, then also with love, hope, patience and other gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are the garments of Christ, in which also the daughters of kings walk, adorned with faith, having judgment over all things, even having God Himself and His precious stones.

The daughters of kings can be taken according to spiritual interpretation also for the churches, and for every soul in particular. But I avoid the secret interpretations, because the interpretation by secret interpretations is not safe, but mostly subtracts from the truth and simplicity of faith. This is what the prophet said about the girls and the women's room, which are most beautifully adorned with faith, Christ, the Holy Spirit and all His gifts. Now he also presents the bride:

The bride is standing at your right hand in precious gold.

The queen, his wife, he calls the bride; she stands all in gold, as it were. This bride is the church and the whole body, especially that which is taken from the synagogue, because Paul and the other apostles converted many cities and nations, among whom were also princes and kings. This is how Sergius was converted [Acts 13:7]. But One is the Bride, who is gathered out of all these members of kings, princes, the weak, the poor, virgins, married couples, and out of all these

One bride, the church. This is generally used, that Christ is called the bridegroom and the church the bride, as in Eph. 5:23 and other passages. For through baptism and the word of the gospel he calls them, and adorns and clothes them with mercy, grace and forgiveness of sins. This is it that he says, "She is at thy right hand." It is a glorious prize, and so it is fitting that no one should be closer to the Bridegroom than the very Bride. This is the highest of all, that the church has all that is Christ's, and of both has become One Body, so that what the church has is Christ's, and again what is Christ's belongs to the church. But this is too great to be stated in human speech, or even to be grasped by our hearts.

But this is modeled in a small way in marriage, where the highest love of the bridegroom towards the bride is One Faith, One Body and One Heart. But between Christ and the Church is the matter itself, while in the physical marriage is only the prestige and the model of this spiritual marriage, where Christ is the Bridegroom, and gives to the Church all that He has. This, therefore, is the pride of the Church, that we may boast, not in our wisdom and righteousness, but in the righteousness and wisdom of our Bridegroom Christ, and all that He Himself has. For in bodily marriage, when the man and the woman are joined together, One Body, the goods become common, the children and everything together. The wife is as much the mistress of the man's goods as the man himself, and differs in nothing from the man, except that the man is the master of the woman. But with regard to the other things that are not the man's, the woman is the mistress of everything, just as the man is. Thus the church recognizes Christ as her Lord, and in regard to other people she says of all the gifts of her bridegroom: This is mine. When sin opposes this, it takes hold of the righteousness of Christ, her bridegroom, and says: "I have the righteousness of my bridegroom, which is mine; therefore keep silent. In the same way, when the devil opposes and wants to frighten, she turns her gaze to the bridegroom and says to the devil: "If I am not your bridegroom, I will be your bridegroom.

If you find sin in me, you will find no sin in Christ, who is mine; therefore let me be content. So when sadness afflicts her, she says: In my bridegroom is life, grace, peace, joy, blessedness; these things are mine, because Christ is mine; why then dost thou terrify me? Thus, she is an exceedingly powerful mistress and queen over death, sin, terror, and all that is of partial rock, and possesses life, righteousness, grace, and blessedness in Christ as a queen with the fullest right.

But because this is something common, that Christ is the bridegroom of the church, it is therefore also despised, and it has come about that bishops, popes, priests have called themselves the bridegrooms of the church, which not even St. John the Baptist dared to say about himself, but he only calls himself the friend of the bridegroom. Therefore, the pope and the bishops, even if they are godly, are not bridegrooms, but only friends and servants of the bridegroom. For One is the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, who gives everything to this Bride. Therefore, the devil has brought up these designations of the pope and the bishops in order to obscure these exceedingly sweet words for us. Because they are in everyone's mouth and in constant use, they are despised. But if they were well mined and made important, by considering them, speaking of them, and believing them, they would bring the highest consolation, because the forgiveness of sins and the whole treasure of divine mercy could not be more gloriously painted and displayed than by calling the church the bride of Christ. For it follows from this painting that the Bride has all that is Christ's. But what does Christ have? Of course, eternal righteousness, wisdom, power, truth, life, joy, grace; therefore, the Church is the Mistress and Queen of mercy, life, blessedness, and all things.

Therefore, what they sang of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the churches would more properly be sung by the Church and should be sung by her, namely, that the Church reigns over death, sin, hell, the devil, over all terrors and evils caused by the devils and men

heredity; not by her strength or her merits, but of her bridegroom Christ, who has put all these exceedingly beautiful ornaments around her neck, who has trodden death underfoot for her, given her life, and redeemed her from all peril by his blood. Therefore she has all these things from her bridegroom, and rightly says to the heretics, Mine is wisdom; to the Gentiles: Mine is righteousness; to the Jews, Mine is the worship of God; to death, Mine is life; to sin: Mine is the forgiveness of sins; to the law, Mine is liberty; to terror: Mine is peace and joy, not by myself or by my strength, but by JEsu Christ my Bridegroom. This is the exceedingly beautiful change, that the church, which is wretched in the eyes of men, is so adorned in the eyes of God.

For if one looks at the outward appearance, there is no heretic who does not surpass her in wisdom, no devil so weak who does not surpass her in power, no sin so small that it should not worry her and plunge her into sadness. Thus she is frightened by death and other evils, so that it appears from the outward appearance as if she were the devil's bride, who has nothing in common with Christ, but is forsaken by him. Therefore, we must get used to this, and lift our hearts upward, and not judge according to what we feel. For if we do this, we perish, because we still feel in ourselves many sins and terrors in the flesh and arrows of the devil. I am often angry, I am often negligent in teaching and praying; when I see this, I am terrified.

But we must not judge according to our own judgment of ourselves. For reason concludes that anyone who has sin in him will be hated by God. I have sin, therefore I am hateful before God, and I fear the wrath of God. But thou shalt say, Not so; but open thine eyes, and overcome sin and the sense of sin, and say, Whether sin be in me or not, whether the sense of death be in me or not, it is nothing to me. One must climb higher, namely to my

Bridegroom, by faith in his word, and say: If there is sin, it is nothing to me, for I am forbidden to judge both myself according to my feelings and the church according to outward appearances; but I am commanded to judge according to the word of promise. But the gospel says something different and reminds me of something different from my feelings, namely that there is one who has no sin and in whose mouth there is no deceit, who has overcome death, the world and sin in himself and says [John 16:33]: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world", sin shall no longer have dominion over you [Romans 6:12], and similar sayings in the holy scriptures. This alone I know, and I also know this, that he has become a bridegroom and has shared everything he has with his bride, the church. I am a part of his church. For I have certain marks and pledges, namely baptism, the gospel, the Lord's Supper, which testify that I am a member of Christ 2c.

This is a great comfort, and a realization that cannot be understood as quickly as I would like. For if we could fully comprehend it, we would never feel any sense of death or sin. But the lack that we do not fully understand this makes our conscience torment us, the dangers frighten us, the remembrance of death and the tribulations frighten us. This lack lies in our grasping, it does not lie with Christ. Just as a person who has fallen into a river grasps the branch of a tree to keep himself afloat, though with difficulty, so that he will not perish, so we also grasp Christ with weak faith in the midst of sins, death and anguish. And yet, however little faith may be, it sustains us, and prevails over death, and tramples the devil and all things underfoot.

So these are great and exceedingly precious words, when you hear that Jesus Christ is the bridegroom and the church the bride, yes, they are heavenly and infinite words, which no man's heart can grasp, nor can ever learn. To those who therefore boast that they know this, say,

that they have heard only a kind of sound of this teaching, and have seen, as it were, only a smoke from afar, but do not know the thing itself at all. But I say this to encourage you to consider these words of the Holy Spirit, which he speaks for our comfort: Consolation, that we may learn how to make them glorious. For there is no one who can hear too much in this piece and grasp Christ too much; there is nothing too much here. Take hold of as much as you can, and yet you will see that it will break you, and that you will not be able to trust in this bridegroom as much as he demands and we need. For there are the devil, sin, the flesh, the blood, our reason: they resist this grasping. And yet, if you take hold of him, whether a little or a lot, you have the bridegroom, and through him life and blessedness.

The appearance of the church is the appearance of a sinner, of one who is afflicted, abandoned, dying and afflicted. For everything that Satan only is and has, the church suffers. So we must make this distinction, that the church with the part that is still left, that is, with the flesh, tosses to and fro in these vices, but in the heart reigns and triumphs in Christ, as Paul says Eph. 2, 5. 6: "God has seated us together with Christ in the heavenly being," 2c., "he has raised us up together with him, he has made us alive together with him." By what? Through faith. Therefore, in the word "bridegroom" is implied an infinite mercy and an inexpressible grace, through which we are made partakers of all the bridegroom's goods. Therefore, just as a housewife in the house behaves toward those who are not her husbands, so a Christian must also behave toward all that is not Christ, because he knows that he is master over sin, death, and all the evils of the devil, not by his cap or other works, not even by the law of God, but by his bridegroom Christ, to whom he is attached in faith.

This must be learned so that we may exalt our glory, and know how to magnify and boast of our gifts, so that the sun and moon may become lowly compared to our gifts, and Satan with all his Mor

and terror are laughed at. Death, indeed, is bitter; other things, as misfortunes and tribulations, are bitter, but nothing compared to Christ: they are as a drop of water held up against the sea, or rather against the fire of the last day. In such a way Christ is to be lifted up in our hearts and with our mouths, that we may learn to grasp our infinite and unspeakable gift. Though no man can duly express it in words, yet we must accustom ourselves to speak much of it, and that is, to make it as great as we can. For it is not hopefulness if we say to sin, Get thee hence; go to the devil, leave me alone. For I am your Lord, for Christ is the Lord; together with him I have been raised and transferred into the heavenly being. Therefore I reign and must exercise my dominion, that I may be accustomed to it.

To speak this, I say, is not to hope; but lay up for thyself all that Christ hath, and be accustomed to possess thy right, and thou shalt see how hard it is. For we are in truth kings over these evils, and lords over all goods that are in Christ, and we all wear golden crowns, but by faith. Now this faith struggles with the quite different outward appearance. Therefore, there is nothing more difficult than this spiritual hope that is in Christ; and yet God would that we could learn and practice this hope perfectly, that we would speak to Satan: What can you do to me with all sins, with death and all evils? With the wise men of the world you are something; with the Turk, the Pope, the princes you are a great lord; but compared with me you are a mere nothing; with me, I say, not in so far as I am a person, but in so far as I am baptized and believe in Christ. And so we are hopeful, and boast even in tribulation, as Paul says [Rom. 5:3.], and laugh at the devil and the world, saying: What is it to me if the devil and the Turk also rage? What is it to me if sin also bites? For I know that my Lord Jesus Christ does not make sad, but the devil makes sad under the form of Christ.

But Christ is nothing else but life, joy, grace and peace 2c.

So we should all make it our main concern to learn to know Christ well, so that with all hope we may attach to ourselves the triumph and majesty that we have in Christ, and bid farewell to the devil, no matter how angry and furious he may be. For in the glory of God we are to be hopeful, not in the filth of our works and merits, but because he is the almighty Bridegroom in the Church, which, though it is laden with various evils, yet has a Bridegroom who takes all these evils upon himself and communicates to it his power and glory. And this is it that he says: "The queen stands in the most precious gold". For she must be gloriously adorned above others, because the whole church has more gifts than the individual Christians. For all goods are in her, that is, there is in her the pure Christ, the pure wisdom of faith, life and glory. With these she is adorned from the sole of her foot to the crown of her head, so that nothing evil can be seen in her, and no stain of unattractiveness is before her eyes, but so it is before God and out of the sight of men. For God sees no wrinkle in her, because He sees nothing in her but His Son, with whom the Church is clothed, from whom she has the blessedness, life and glory that is in Christ. Now if there is sin, the devil sees it, and we feel it, each in his conscience, but God does not see it. For because of His Son Christ, with whom the Church is clothed, it is all beautiful, without a spot or wrinkle, because Christ is all beautiful and without a spot. Therefore also the church, which is clothed by him and in him, is of the same nature. Thus the prophet has described both the king in his splendor and the queen, that Christ has a church, which the apostles prepare for him, which is in the first bloom. Now he also adds exhortations.

V. 11. Listen, daughter, look to it, and incline your ears, forgetting your people and your father's house. The Holy Spirit addresses the church and the synagogue in general, as if to say: This will be difficult, what I prescribe for you,

Since you are to do this alone and primarily, that you hear only this king, put all other kings and masters aside, and pay attention to this one alone. Furthermore, because the people of the Jews were greatly afflicted by the devil, and were surrounded on all sides by enemies who adhered to a different religion, they were also turned to idolatry by their examples, and joined themselves sometimes with the Egyptians, sometimes with the Assyrians, sometimes with Moab, sometimes with Ammon, 2c., and could not be kept in the right religion and worship in their temple. Since Christ had been born and was teaching, they should have held to all his words as the bride holds on her bridegroom. But what happens? Not only do they not hear him, but they even persecute him and kill him. Therefore, here the prophet touches the highest and most difficult ground of proof, which has been in the world from the beginning and is still there today, namely, that against the teaching of Christ and the apostles they repeated (ingeminabant) the words: Fathers, fathers, temple, temple, Moses, Moses, the prophets, the prophets! They could not get over this trouble, although there were obvious prophecies that the law and the kingdom would cease one day; but they started and fell. So nowadays with the papists this is an insurmountable ground of proof which they hold against us: Do you think that the church, which is holy and universal, and which has the promise that it shall remain until the end of the world, should have erred for so many years? But because we have to teach against this church, which they praise, they are angry.

The Jews opposed the gospel to Moses, who promised them the kingdom on one condition, which they did not keep, as it is also said in Ps. 132:12: "Will your children keep my covenant" 2c., and declared that the gospel was a teaching against the first commandment. Thus the papists accuse our doctrine of being against Christ Himself and against the church. It is therefore one and the same reason on which the Jews then, and nowadays our adversaries, take offence, and on which we too sometimes take offence, when our consciences are in conflict with

Do you then think that all their things are condemned, and hold that you alone see and understand more than so many great men who have been in the church? This reason is, as it were, an immense mountain and an immense sea, which we must cross and navigate; and truly, if Paul had not resolved this reason so excellently in the letter to the Romans, the Jews and the Gentiles, yes, even we ourselves, would have had much to trouble ourselves about.

And the prophet sees in this passage that there would be great danger and trouble from this, that the Jews would boast of their blood, the fathers and the promises. For the promise of the flower is true; the prophet does not here revoke it, nor does he deny the first commandment, but says that the promise must be understood as referring to Christ as the head whom they should expect and receive, as if he wanted to say: You will have the scepter, you will have the priesthood, as Gen. 49:10. is written. The Lord will be with you, but it is added: "Until the hero come." So the Jews knew that Messiah was to be expected, and that they should hold him in such honor that they heard him. But what do they do? They skip the little word "until that" and simply insist on the promise and conclude: We are the people of God forever. Even if Messiah comes, he will not be able to teach anything better than what Moses taught. Therefore, we will remain the people of God as we have been until now, except that we will then have a more powerful king who will free us from the Romans. But this means to destroy and renounce the promise of Christ, which contains all other promises.

Thus we have the promise of the Church that Christ will remain with the Church; we have baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Gospel, the Holy Scriptures, pastors, the gifts of the Holy Spirit. All this remains in the Church through the special benevolence of God. For if God had not preserved the Bible and given some people to read it, it would have been taken away and destroyed by the devil long ago. But that the bishops

make this addition and say: Even if we do not read the Bible, even if we do not do what our ministry requires, we cannot err because we have the power of the keys, for the church does not err, nor can it err. This cannot be tolerated, and they cannot suffer it to be confessed.

Therefore, they have the same confidence in the carnal church that the Jews had in being the people of God, and they turn the entirely spiritual promise into an entirely carnal promise. Whoever has vowed to God, they say, to enter into a spiritual state, whoever lives without marriage 2c. is blessed. But these are entirely carnal things, and lead us away from Christ to ourselves, who are carnal; therefore all the holiness of the papacy is a purely carnal one. But the church is to live in the spiritual promise, and is to sit on the throne as a mistress of life, over death, sin and the devil, through Christ and the forgiveness of sins. This is the spiritual promise. It is not to sit on the throne with Moses and the monks, for that does not mean to sit in dominion over the devil and sin, but in the kingdom of the devil and abomination. Therefore, as the Jews clung to the carnal promise and destroyed the spiritual one, so do the papists today. Therefore, this is the highest ground of proof that the prophet touches here, and here it takes all the trumpets and trumpets to make it sound: Hear, hear, daughter, encourage yourself! Close the eyes of the flesh, do not judge according to fleshly righteousness and wisdom, as if he wanted to say: If you do not hear, but want to be wise and judge according to outward appearances what the church is and what the church is not, you are lost. That is why he uses such strong words and wants to impress the truth upon us, so that we will not be deceived by the irritation, because, as we have heard, it is an exceedingly strong reason for proof.

So it is an admonition to the synagogue and the people, who had promises, prophecies and songs about this kingdom. For he foresees in the spirit the unbelief of the people because of the insurmountable

proof ground on which they relied, which would have been impossible for us to refute, as it were, had it not been for the interpretation of the apostles. For we learn in all things that it is difficult to leave what one is accustomed to, because, as is said in Proverbs, a new pot takes on the taste, but an old one gives it off (*nova testa capit, inveterata sapit*). But how much more difficult is this in the greatest and spiritual things, which concern the future life, about which the greatest strife is, because here there are zealots who strive with great diligence for what belongs to eternal life. For no one would like to be deceived here, but the matter is treated with the greatest seriousness. Now the people of the Jews had these privileges and advantages from the seed, and were born of Abraham, and, as Paul enumerates Rom. 9, 4, 5. (where he treats of the same matter), had the adoption, the glory, the covenant, the law, the worship, the promises, the fathers, in short, there is nothing concerning this people that is not wholly divine. When this is held up to the Gentiles, it is an insurmountable ground of proof.

Therefore, the prophet feels this difficulty and reminds: "Hear", as if to say: There is no way to help, no sufficient refutation, if you do not hear. If you do not hear, you cannot understand. But the more they are disputed, the more hardened they become. And what wonder is there in the Jews, since we cannot make the papists think otherwise, even though they confess that our doctrine is true? How much less could the Jews be persuaded to leave their traditional worship, which had been given to them by God, adorned with so many miracles, kept by so many and so great holy fathers, prophets and kings. Add to this that it is exceedingly miserable to live daily in death and danger, as we live, while they had the promise of bodily goods and the land of Canaan which they were to leave. Therefore, he says, "Listen," as if to say, "There is no help, no way, no means to persevere in the service of God, if you do not

hear. He who will not hear cannot be advised, as Christ points out again and again, John 3:11: "We speak that we see, and ye receive not our testimony. The papists are like that; because they do not want to listen, we argue with them in vain."

Therefore, this teaching belongs to those who are willing to hear and learn, not to the struggling ones. For these, may you tell them or sing or paint, do not accept this "Hear". But it is said to them to their destruction, that they may have no excuse; but to us it is said, that the heart may look on the word, and cleave to the word alone. Whoever omits this or does not allow the word, cannot be persuaded with any reasons of proof. I have also fought against the sects of our time, but at no time have I been able to obtain that from them that they would have answered even one word that served the cause, even if I presented the cause to them in such a way that they could have grasped it with their hands. The reason for this is this, Proverbs 18:2: A fool does not accept reasonable words; he accepts nothing if you do not speak to him what is in his heart. Likewise, Proverbs 27:22: "If you pounded the fool in the mortar, he would not hear." There is no plowshare so sharp, no plow so strong, that it could subdue the same. Neither the prophets, nor Christ, nor the apostles have been able to do this, because those who are fools do not want to hear, and always have something to spit out. Therefore, this belongs to those who have a listening ear, and give themselves captive under the word to the obedience of Christ, and say: I do not want to be wise, I do not want to judge these things according to my wisdom, but surrender myself to this word as a disciple, and hear what the divine majesty says to me, as the Holy Spirit says here and advises: "Hear". And he adds:

Look at it.

This I refer to the works. For according to my simplicity, I hold that these two pieces must be distinguished in such a way that "Hear" is to be referred to the Word and "Look upon" is to be referred to the works of Christ, because GOD

always gives signs or adds miracles next to the word, and never a new word has been revealed without signs following it. Thus, when the promise of life was given to Abraham, the sign of circumcision was added. In the same way, Moses was given signs at the same time as he was commanded to lead the people to Canaan. So Christ filled the whole world with miraculous signs when he taught, as did the apostles. So we also have our signs: the Word, Baptism and Holy Communion. Yes, great works are still happening in the church today, so that testimonies to our teachings are available; but only the godly see these works, the godless do not see them. For the fact that, contrary to our expectations and those of our adversaries, peace has been preserved for so many years and is still being preserved miraculously today, even though the world is so furious against the gospel and hates it with all its heart, is this not to be considered a great sign?

But the world and the flesh do not see and understand this. But the godly, who have spiritual eyes, and know the power of Satan and the wickedness of men, see these wonders, that our doctrine has not been overthrown for so many years, neither by the tyranny of princes, nor by the hatred and deceit of the pope, nor by the wickedness of heretics. So it remains: You shall hear this king, and you shall see his works, although he will not appear visibly before your eyes, and he does not want to be an earthly king; but you shall hear his word, and you shall generally see his miracles; that shall be enough for you. For after thou hast heard his word, and hast seen and beheld his works, then shall he also inwardly manifest himself unto thee in the spirit. Thou canst hear him no other way than in his word, and thou canst see him no other way than in his signs. After this revelation of the word and the signs, faith and certainty will follow, and other things that the Holy Spirit will bring with him, who will strengthen you against all error and doubt; only listen, my daughter, to what your King Christ says, and look at what he does.

And bend your ears.

That is, believe. For he secretly indicates how hard the neck of this people is, which does not know how to bend, as if he wanted to say: My daughter (for so he calls the Jewish people), do not rebel against the word, nor harden your neck when you hear the word and see the works of God, but believe; bow your head and humble yourself. For the two foregoing are outward; this third is inward, that it should bow the heart, and say: I believe. This is necessary, otherwise there is no help. Some teachers, such as Gerson and others, have admonished to do the same, although they have not kept the right way, that in cases of conscience one should hear a brother who gives comfort, and have said that the counsel of a good man is sufficient. But this admonition is not sufficient. For a troubled conscience says, Where shall I find a good man, and how can I be sure that he is a good man? Therefore, the advice of a good man should be to throw away everything that one feels at the moment and to cling completely to the hearing of the word that one hears from the brother. But this is very difficult, and in truth it means to kill oneself and to go out of oneself, to close all one's senses and to pay attention to what the one who comforts says. For it is God's command that one should hear the brother who brings the word of the gospel in such distresses of conscience. But even though Gerson and others recognized that this must be done, they could not base the counsel of a good man on God's word alone. For to this end the keys have been given to the church, that one may comfort another through the word, and so destroy the works of the devil [1 John 3:8]. Whoever therefore knows that this is commanded by God, that one should comfort another, can comfort himself and say: I am bound to believe this brother, because he is guilty of taking away the distresses of conscience and healing them by the word; and so I am obedient to God when I hear the brother. Then in truth it is called the counsel of a good man, namely Christ, whose word is offered to me and whom I believe.

So it is in the battle against the pope and against the devilish reason for proof that he reproaches the church, that although the pope is a sinner according to his person, he nevertheless has the rightful office and the regiment, which we must obey: there we can protect ourselves with no other sword than with this verse, that we are commanded: "Hear, and look upon it, and incline thine ears." We are to say, as Paul says in the Epistle to the Romans Cap. 9 against the Jews, "I hear the fathers, I hear the church, I hear the ministry, that the pope sits in the office of the word, that he has baptism, that he has the fellowship and title of the church, but I will make a distinction and not be caught by this ground of proof. The pope says this, therefore you must do it. For here it is commanded, "Hear." Therefore, if the pope teaches something that is according to the word, I will hear it and do it, but if he speaks against the word, I will not hear him.

But this reason of proof weighs much more heavily in the heart when the devil alone holds it against you: Behold, you are only one, and you want to destroy this exceedingly beautiful regime (monarchiam), which is ordered with very great insight. For if it is admitted that there are errors and sins in the papacy, who are you? Are you without errors and sins? Why then do you cause confusion and disturbance in the tabernacle of the Lord, since you can punish nothing but errors and sins, of which you also have plenty? This causes great distress, as it is evident that Paul also had a lot of trouble with this reason, Rom. 9. Then one must get used to the fact that all power lies in taking hold of the word, hearing the word, and looking at the works of God and believing them. Whoever does not do this will be fallen by Satan.

Therefore we answer that we do not accuse the pope of his personal (privatis) errors and sins. For although we must condemn these, we forgive and pardon them, just as we want ours to be forgiven. Therefore, we do not act against the pope because of pri-

It is not about the vices and sins of the person, but about the teaching and the hearing of the word, because the pope, along with his own sins, also challenges the honor and grace of God, and Christ Himself, of whom the Father says [Matth. 17, 5]: "Him you shall hear. For the pope wants to take this hearing away from Christ and usurp it, and turn us, who are Christ's disciples, away from Christ to himself. Over this matter we fight. For this is not the question of whether there is error and sin in life, but about higher things, namely, whether the Son of God died for us and was raised again, and that one has preached and must preach about him, and that he should be heard. Since the pope wants to defend himself against this by holding up the reputation of the church against us, we say: Get thee hence, Satan; we forgive thee thy sins, but the blasphemies and denials of Christ we do not forgive, neither do we consent to them, for Christ is greater than the church which thou holdest against us. Yes, because your church persecutes the word of Christ, it is not the church of God, but of Satan 2c.

And forget your people and your father's house.

This is a very clear text, that Christ came to abolish the whole law, the priesthood and the kingdom of the Jews. For this is the reason why she should hear, look, incline her ears and believe, namely because she should leave the Father's house. It is a very hard text against the Jews, but sweet to us who believe. For we must take the "people" not only according to grammar for the great multitude, and the "house" for the stones and the wood, but he calls the people: God's people, who are ordered by God, provided by Moses with worldly regiment and worship, but whom he received from God; since the princes and kings in the worldly regiment, the priests and Levites in the church are not set nor protected by men, but given by God, and preserved by miracles. To those, therefore, who have the people, the fathers, the house, he says, "Forget." And he does not say only: Forsake your people, or go away from them, but plainly: "Forget", and

1) "Röm." is missing in the Erlanger.

You shall know that this worldly regime and this worship is condemned and rejected, so that you must forget it completely.

From this it follows that in Jesus Christ the righteousness of the law is of no value, nothing of the service in the temple, the worship of God and the sacrifices of the priests and Levites. But you see that here is Paul's reason for arguing against the Jews about the worship that they so stubbornly held against the gospel. For this people had a special praise because of their worship, as it is written in Deut. 4:6: "This shall be your wisdom and understanding among all nations, that they shall say, What wise and understanding men are these, and what a glorious people! But here he says, "This glory of the righteousness of the law and of works counts for nothing under this king; because you, my daughter, are not helped by these things, forget all about it. But by these words he reaches into the innermost part of the heart, that he wants them to turn to Christ in such a way that they completely forget the former things and do not even look back to them, as Abraham forgot the land of the Chaldeans, and Joseph his fatherland, since he, because he had given up all hope of being able to return, called his son Manasseh [Gen. 41, 51.]. So also here he says: You shall go to this king in such a way that you completely despair of that worldly regime and priesthood and the whole old worship. For he will set up for you a different and better kingdom than the kingdom of the law.

Therefore the Holy Spirit here indicates how tender this doctrine is, and how faith cannot suffer all other services of God, so that he wills that they should not even be remembered, as also the sixteenth Psalm, v. 4. says, "I will not have their name in my mouth." For he calls "their names" in this place worship, religion, and all the righteousness of the law, which he does not wish to be remembered. Not as if it were not lawful to remember what had happened to this people, but that it should not be preached and taught, rather that it should be taken for something that is now and

It is not to be lost, which will never return and will be of no use in the future, and not to eat up what has been eaten [Proverbs 26:11], but to go forward and strive for what is before us, so that Christ may be known more and more, until we forget the righteousness of the law altogether, as if it had never existed. So also those who have lived in monasteries and in the real Babylonian captivity, after they have come to Christ, must be so occupied with Christ alone (as far as righteousness is concerned) that it does not even occur to them that they have ever been monks, or said mass, or ever called upon any saint, 2c., but make believe that they have been Christians all the time.

I, at least, being a monk, labored very hard for almost fifteen years with daily mass-keeping, martyred myself with fasting, vigils, prayers and other very arduous works, because I was earnestly anxious to attain righteousness by my works, and did not think it possible that I should ever forget this life. But now, by God's grace, I have forgotten it. I still remember that torture chamber, but not in such a way that I would think of returning to that dungeon. But, to speak carnally, it was not a dungeon, but a soft life, without all the hardships that both the worldly regiment and the household have without number. Nevertheless, it was a dungeon for pious people who were not only concerned about their belly, but desired to be blessed. Thus, the word "forget" implies many things, especially that the doctrine should be completely pure, which is easily corrupted and obscured.

But as doctrine suffers no addition, so faith is also a very tender thing, and has great need of this commandment: "Forget thy father's house." For the flesh is always looking back to Egypt, and to the fleshpots, that is, by nature we are impetuously drawn to the righteousness of the flesh, and seek works to boast of, to trust in, and to hold up to God: Behold,

I have done this and that; therefore you will declare me righteous; as the Anabaptists and others do, who, when they have rejected the heretics under one name of works, 1) bring back the same (eos) under another name. One condemns the berets (pilea gallica) and praises the gray skirt, as they call it, another wants to have nothing of his own, so that he may the more freely take what belongs to other people without work; and this foolish work they consider a peculiar sanctity. Thus they discard the works of the old monks and bring back new monks.

And we should not be too secure against this destruction. Every one of us carries a great monk in his bosom, that is, we would all like to have such a work of which we could boast: "Behold, I have done this; I have done God enough today with my prayers, with good deeds, therefore I can be calmer in my heart. For it has also happened to me that when I have done a work of my profession, I am much happier than if I had not done it. And to be cheerful is not in itself evil; but this cheerfulness is without faith, and not pure; and it is of a kind that it wants to arrest and trouble the conscience. But because the conscience is something exceedingly tender, it cannot be sufficiently fortified against this vice of presumption. Therefore let no one be secure, but let us who confess Christ walk in fear and increase in faith, recognizing that we all carry in our bosoms a monstrously large and ugly monk, that is, a foolish and carnal delusion of works, a ruin to faith.

Against this ungodly delusion, the Holy Spirit here holds out to us the perfect goal of purity, namely that we should first forget this righteousness, at least in the outward service of the Word. [We are to hold on to what we have attained in this through God's grace, and not to preach the righteousness of works, but the pure righteousness of Christ,

who suffered for us and was raised from death. The other parts of the preaching ministry are also pure, namely the administration of the sacraments, the comforting, the governing of the church is pure. And as this purity takes place in the preaching office, so it should also be in our hearts. But what happens? In preaching I have completely forgotten this monk, and no one hears his name from me, but in the heart I do not serve my word, which I teach purely with my mouth, but sometimes the monk creeps in unawares. But this is also a great blessing of God, that God has put the goal of purity into the teaching, so that at least the teaching is pure. We must strive for this goal, so that, as the doctrine is pure, so also faith may be pure in grasping and holding on to Christ. But this does not happen. Therefore, as long as we live, we have to struggle with this monk and the devil who rules and strengthens him. And also the Holy Spirit, seeing that our nature is so entangled in monasticism (monachatum), is with us with reminders and admonitions that we should listen, that we should learn to forget all past works, even our best righteousness, so that, just as the teaching of this monk has forgotten, so also our heart may forget all that and cling in pure faith to the righteousness of Christ alone.

It is that he says: "Forget your people", namely not a pagan, godless or unholy people, but the one who has the law and its righteousness. If the law is good (they reproach us), and God has commanded it, why do you reject it? Here, I believe, you are well instructed and know what to answer. For the law is done away, that faith alone might rule the conscience (propter conscientiam fidei). If, therefore, it does not injure the conscience by the delusion of its own righteousness, then it can be kept in outward conduct like other laws of the worldly regime. But since we are dealing here with the article of what Christ is, 2) that he is our

1) rosootis Naorotiois opornm [nt, u "o "online. Thus the Jena and the Erlangen. In contrast, the Wittenberg: rejeetis üaeretieornln operidns etc. but has nevertheless retained eos in the postscript.

2, Statt: M in the Wittenberg and in the Jena has the Erlangen: äieitur.

If Christ is the king and our head, then not only are the human statutes abolished and rejected, but also the whole divine law, so that this one king Christ may be held in completely pure faith. For since the law does not cease to mislead the faith and conscience of the baptized, Christ also puts it away bodily before he should suffer this. Therefore the whole law is taken away; first spiritually from the conscience, then also bodily. Although it was not necessary for it to be abolished, he nevertheless took it away because of the danger to the faith, so that not only did the service of God cease, but also the temple and Jerusalem were destroyed, and the Jews scattered over the whole earth; and rightly so. The same will happen to the pope. Because he does not stop persecuting the Word, he will therefore perish with all the monasteries, bishops and foundations of the priests.

Therefore, he speaks of the abandonment of the law in faith and spirit, because faith knows nothing of the law, of works and of our righteousness and our powers. For it is much higher than all this and must be placed in paradise, higher than the earth and beyond the earth into the heavenly being, where one does not hear: What have you done? What have you omitted? For these sermons of the law shall not be admitted in the closet of the conscience and in paradise. But there alone shalt thou hear of this king, what he hath done, and what he hath given thee, and what he hath required: That they may take hold of him, and give him thanks for such great benefits. Only this shall be heard in this place. Now when the law comes, cast it out of this chamber of the bridegroom, and say that it shall remain on the earth, and go to Damascus, 1) to Sinai, where it has a place. This is the spiritual abthun, which he indicates by the word "forget". These words "people" and "house" must not be belittled. Because these are the highest things in this world, and

Nothing in the whole creature can be compared to them. But very emphatically (invidiose) he adds the pronoun "your": "your people", "your father's house", as if he heard that the daughter was reproached: "Behold, it is your people, it is your father's house, therefore you must not leave it, but hear and be obedient and not sacrilegiously take up the new doctrine which deviates from the law which God has given. For, as it seems, he speaks rebelliously against the fourth commandment, just as if someone said that one should not give the prince a womb; for that would be to incite rebellion and the overthrow of the worldly regime. Thus, here he praises the forgetting of the father's house as the highest service of God, even though the fourth commandment, which God commanded, teaches that one should honor one's parents.

From this answer thus: To honor the parents, to obey the prince, is good and godly, but nevertheless one must prefer GOD to them, whom one must obey more [Apost. 5, 29.] Therefore, if such a case arises that one must leave either the father or GOD, then say: Farewell, dear father, with the fourth commandment and with the whole second tablet; I know nothing about you, but have completely forgotten yours. For now it is not about the fourth commandment, or the second tablet, but about the first, whether God is true, whether honor is due to Him, whether one should hear God's Son. Allow me this first, then I will also honor you with every kind of filial reverence. But he does not admit this; for when the Father's house comes into the heart, it takes over the heart in such a way that it wants to be and rule there alone; there it fights against faith with the highest obstinacy, as this is evident in the Jews who say [Sam. 12, 22]: "God will not abandon His people" 2c.

The same happens to us with the pope. For I would not only honor the pope to the highest degree if he would allow me to follow the right doctrine, but also any school theologian (scholasticum). For it does not harm my faith if I honor him, if he only leaves me the first tablet. For I am baptized in the house of the pope, there I am instructed in the Catechism and have the

1) In the Erlanger after the first edition: st eat Duma oum, aü Sinai; here probably the s from Dumdum will have dropped out. The Wittenberg and the Jena offer: ed ernt in mondbin Sinai.

I have learned the Scriptures. I will gladly do this honor to my people and my dear fellow citizens, that I do not forget my father's house, if he only allows me to believe in Christ alone and to keep my conscience free from any burden. But the pope does not allow this and insists that I follow his teaching and set aside the word of Christ. Therefore I say: Because I cannot keep both, my Father's house and Christ, then my King Christ shall remain with me, and my Father's house with the whole people may go wherever it wants. Thus he calls "the Father's house" and "the people" all religions, all righteousnesses, all laws, also those of the pagans, the philosophers and the jurists. All this may go, since it is of no use to this kingdom, even harmful, so that this word may stand, John 1:13: "Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God."

V. 12. Thus the king will delight in your beauty.

This is a very sweet promise. For the Holy Spirit knows well that this abomination is in our heart, that we would like to be pure and without spot before God. So in the whole 1) Pabstium this was our challenge, that we said we would gladly go to the Sacrament if we were worthy. So we seek purity in ourselves, as we are by nature, and search our whole life, desiring to find purity in ourselves, so that grace may not be necessary, but we may be declared righteous according to our merit. This way (*habitus*) is ingrained in our flesh, and the Holy Spirit knows that we want "the beautiful" of ourselves. This is how we think when we want to pray: I wanted to pray with pleasure, but I am not worthy of GOd to hear me. These thoughts come from that great monk of whom I said before, who is in us, poisoning our conscience, that we look at our worthiness, and do not want to pray until we are better. But

1) *omni* in the original edition and in the Wittenberg is changed to *omnis* in the Jena and Erlangen.

you will never pray if you want to wait until you become better. For if this is required beforehand, that we be righteous, why then do we pray in the Lord's Prayer, Forgive us our trespasses? Rather, if you feel that you are a sinner and unskilled in praying, then you must make the most of prayer and go to the Sacrament. For how else will you be justified but by the Word and the Sacraments? By yourself and by your works you will certainly never become righteous. So in all of us is this pernicious tendency (*argumentum*) that our monk has, that we look to our purity.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit says: I will give thee very fair counsel, by which, if thou hear me, thou shalt become an exceeding fair maiden. For if thou wilt become beautiful before God, that all thy works may please Him, that He may say: I like thy prayer, I like all that thou sayest, doest, and thinkest, so shalt thou do, "Hear, and look thereon, and incline thine ears," and so shalt thou be exceedingly beautiful, if thou hear, and look thereon, and forget thy former righteousness, and every law, and all the statutes of men, and all this monk, and believe: then thou art beautiful, not by thine own beauty, but by the beauty of the King, who hath adorned thee with his word, which bringeth unto thee his righteousness, holiness, truth, strength, and all the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

But here we are deceived first of all by our delusion, which is that of the monk who was born with us, who firmly adheres to our flesh and conscience; then also by the low esteem in which the word is held, which is preached to the multitude and has no particular appearance. Therefore we think that we are not sufficiently adorned when we have only the Word, when we are baptized, when we receive Holy Communion, when we are called by the Gospel. We do not consider this supreme adornment to be an adornment because of its outward appearance, for it is, as it seems, lowly and common to all. For what is this ornament (say the Anabaptists), that one is sprinkled with water? For this is the judgment of the eyes of the flesh, but if you look at baptism with spiritual eyes, you will see that it is not an ornament.

you will see that baptism clothes you with the garments and adornment of Christ. So Holy Communion clothes you with the adornment of Christ, so the Gospel clothes you with the adornment of Christ. What better and more delicious adornment could you desire than that with which Christ is adorned and with which he adorns his own?

Thus the Holy Spirit reminds us that we must be made beautiful by strange beauties. Then (he says) if you hear and believe and forget your righteousness, so that you know of nothing to trust in but the adornment of your Bridegroom Christ, then you will be beautiful in truth, and the King will delight in your beauty. But what do we do? Of course the opposite. We bring back the hall of the Father, which he has commanded us to forget. Oh (we say), I am a sinner; I first want to become worthy and pure before I go to this bridegroom. What is this but wanting to bring back the Father's house and offer one's own righteousness, which he commands to leave, and let that monk back in? But you should say like this: I don't know anything about that worthiness. Whether I am worthy or unworthy, I do not care about it; that is now gone. If I am unworthy outwardly and in the second tablet, that may be so, for that is my impurity; but inwardly I am beautiful through foreign adornment. There I am completely holy and adorned in the best way, because the king loves this beauty, when I hear the word and forget my monk, and believe my King Christ that I am redeemed by his blood and made righteous by his merit.

When this faith is there, whatever I do afterwards pleases him, and he delights in my hell, which he himself has bestowed upon me. Therefore, I should not doubt that I am exceedingly beautiful, and that everything I do is most pleasing to God for the sake of Christ, whom I take in faith as my Savior. When I open my mouth to teach or to pray, I should believe that all the angels are smiling at me and rejoicing, and whoever hears me teach should know that I am beautiful.

He will prepare for God an extremely sweet-smelling sacrifice. For we must come to this, and that means to forget the Father's house and the people, to hold fast the present righteousness of faith against the old righteousness of works: then it will come about that we are exceedingly pleasing to God.

But the Holy Spirit uses very sublime words: "The King will delight in your beauty", that is, you will bring him through this faith to do what you want, that he, provoked by the sting of love, will follow you of his own free will, that he will be with you and make his home with you. For when God has given His word, He does not leave standing the work He has begun in you, but first gives you temptations from the world, from the devil and from our flesh, to wake you up. These are his embraces with which he embraces his bride, in impatient love. For if we were without temptations, we would not seek him, we would not learn to listen, to look to him, to incline our ears to him. Therefore he urges us to cling more firmly to your words and to believe him, and he does this out of exceedingly great love for us. But these 1) embraces are so sweet to our flesh that they often bring tears to our eyes; yet they are very useful to us. But this is an exceedingly great comfort, if we could only grasp it because of its greatness, that our King Christ is not only pleased with the word and faith, but is also moved and carried away by such love for us as a bridegroom has for his bride, that he goes after us of his own free will. To this we urge him, if only we hear the word and believe and forget our righteousness. But it is difficult. God grant that we may do this at least in teaching and in the service of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments, and to some extent also in life, and, as we have begun to do, may learn to forget this monk, so that he at least does not reign in us, as with the Sacramentarians, Anabaptists and Papists, whom this monk has completely devoured, so that they are nothing but shorn monks. From this plague, may God protect us in mercy. Amen.

1) Erlanger: ille statt: Wed.

This, then, is the conclusion, that our beauty does not consist in our own virtues, nor in the gifts we have received from God, by which we perform virtuous actions and do everything that belongs to the life of the law, but in this, if we take hold of Christ and believe in him; then we are beautiful in truth, and Christ looks at this beauty alone, and at none besides. So that it is taught that we want to be beautiful through self-chosen spirituality and through our own righteousness is nothing. It is true that in the courts of men and in the courts of the wise these things are beautiful, but in the courts of God we must have a different beauty. There, the only beauty is that of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. He erases all stains and wrinkles and makes us pleasing to God. This faith is something almighty and the highest beauty, apart from which there is no beauty. For without and apart from Christ we are condemned and lost with all that we have and are.

For he is your Lord, and you shall call him by name.

In the last verse we heard that this teaching is very difficult for those who have become accustomed to the righteousness of the law. Therefore, there are few who grasp it so completely that they trust in the grace of Christ alone and reject their own righteousness and do not return to this rejected righteousness. And what is it to be wondered at that the Jews do not embrace it, who are upset in the law, since the papists do not embrace it, with whom we have now been fighting for many years over the mere fact that we teach that sinners are justified by faith alone, and not by the works of the law, much less by such works as are chosen without a certain command of God. To this exceedingly difficult subject he attaches another, which is still far more difficult, which the Jews cannot even hear, and about which even in the church the heretics have aroused great unrest. For after having taught that the synagogue should forget its people and the house of its father, and should cling to the preaching of the Gospel alone (which in itself is very difficult), he now also adds a reason which the Jews are still

that Christ is their Lord and their God, whom they must worship, that is, that Christ is the Lord of the Law, to whom the people and the Father's house and the whole Law must give way, and that for this reason, because the Law was given through servants, but now the Lord and King and God Himself is there.

Now here make a distinction between the gifts and the giver. God gave Moses, he gave the blood of Abraham, he gave the law, he gave the righteousness of the law, he gave miracles in the old law, he gave many other gifts of the Holy Spirit: but what is this but that he finally gave himself? All that there is, therefore, of laws and gifts, in short, all that is not the Lord, let it all yield to this King, and let all obey this reigning Lord, Christ. In His beauty alone we can and should safely trust, because it pleased God that in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead; in all other things there is, so to speak, only a little piece of the Godhead. For there are various gifts, and manifold are the powers distributed [1 Cor. 12, 4. 6.], but here in Christ you are complete heirs (ὁλόκληροι, like

Peter [1. Ep. 1, 4.] says), you have the whole inheritance, because in him is the whole possession and all goods in one heap, because he is the Lord. In such a way, he says, you must therefore cling to him most intimately, that you forget all former things, and know nothing of your former conduct and righteousness, nothing of outward ceremonies, and grasp only the greatness of your King and Lord.

Therefore, when the adversaries or Satan insist on the law and reproach you with these sayings: Overcome evil with patience [Rom. 12:21.], "Love your enemies" [Matt. 5:44.] 2c., say, I fully admit this. And if the devil urge further: But this thou hast not done, therefore art thou damned, answer from this passage of the Psalm, and say, I acknowledge my guilt, that I have sinned; but yet will I be a dialectician, and make a distinction between the gift and the giver. For will you equate or even prefer the gift to the giver? I think not. Why do you complain

you accuse me of being deficient in that gift and of having sinned against the law, since I have the Giver Himself, who is the Lord and my God; but we must have the Giver above all things and esteem Him more highly than the gifts. But we do not reject good works, as they accuse us, but we make a distinction and give to works and gifts their circle and place, but to our Lord Himself we reserve the whole heaven and the whole kingdom. Therefore the gifts and powers should be serviceable and exercise us, but not rule in us; but Christ should rule in us, who should be the Lord over our conscience. In him we want to remain alone and pure, then we will be blessed, and everything will be pleasing to God. This is the reason why he commands us to throw away all righteousness, gifts and powers and to forget them, namely in comparison to the King and for the sake of the King who loves us and who is the Lord our God.

He is your Lord.

XXX is a holy name, which in this form, as it stands here, is assigned only to the true and natural God, as all Jews testify. But because this name is here clearly attributed to Christ, this proof (probatio) enrages the Jews even more than the assumed proposition (assumpta propositio), because it says contradictory things: Man is God. According to the judgment of the Jews and the reason, the prophet therefore proves something unbelievable and inconsistent by something else, which is even more unbelievable and inconsistent. But God does not care what the wicked think of His word, but by His word He orders and speaks in such a way that it always seems inconsistent to reason. But it behooves us to listen humbly and to agree; if we do so, we will see that this proof is exceedingly powerful. He says that this King Christ is God, so he will not lie. But if he is God, then everything must also yield to him, Moses, the Law, and all the righteousnesses and laws that exist in the whole Church. Therefore, this is the second annoying part, that he calls Christ God and King,

but above called a man [v. 3.]: "You are the most beautiful among the children of men." Therefore, this psalm is one of the most distinguished that treats Christ's kingdom, and especially the description of His person, that He is true God and true man.

But these passages must be carefully held and the consciences fortified against the arrows of the devil. For we see that many who have not laid hold of these passages have been brought down by the devil, such as the Arians, Sabellians, Eunomians, and before them the Samosatians, all of whom wished to ascend to heaven with their thoughts and seize the divine majesty, while yet they could not fully discern the works in which they lived and we live. For who is he who should presume to claim that he knows how speech originates in the mouth, how food and drink are digested and gradually transformed into flesh and blood, how many thousands of people hear One Voice in the same way and fully as we fall asleep 2c. Therefore, if we cannot reach the works with which we all have to deal and under which we live daily, and which happen in us and by us, and say: what nonsense, what madness is it that one wants to go up to heaven, apart from us, and measure the Godhead according to the quite incomprehensible human reason. But such people are the hopeful spirits, who do not listen, do not look at it, do not bend their ears toward God who is speaking, but want to argue and talk about such great things out of their heads.

Therefore, fortify yourselves against such thoughts. For if we understand nothing of our powers and works, how can we know God who is apart from us, who is invisible and incomprehensible? And learn that in this article and similar ones we must absolutely stand on God's word and incline our ears to Him. Now, if God says incredible things, what does that matter to you, since you cannot understand other far lesser things that go on under our senses? Hilarius also uses this proof: since we are patient in what we do not know about sensual things, it is not fitting that we should be impatient in what we do not know about God.

know. For we do not know of the food and drink that we take, how and by what means it is transformed, and it is certainly inconsistent; and we are sorry that we cannot know of God how the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, three Persons, are the One, true, inseparable God.

Now this article, that Christ is God, angers first of all the Jews, so that they think there is nothing more abominable than that one must hear that Christ is God; secondly, it angers also the devil; thirdly, it angers also our reason. Do not be like them, for they are enemies of Christ and his word, but incline your ears, and moreover do not allow anything. For if thou speculate without the word of this article, it is done for thee. For this also happens in lesser articles, that if you speculate or think about them without the Scriptures, you fall into extraordinary 1) ungodliness. For if I sometimes think about God, the Creator of heaven, about baptism and other such things, and leave the word pending, this thinking has neither juice nor power, but is like a vain dream. Now what do you think will happen in this supreme article? Therefore, you should know that the articles of faith cannot be taught or thought without the pure Word of God alone, especially this article about the divinity of Christ. Therefore, we are to learn to accustom ourselves to the Word of God and to incline our ears to it. But because the Jews do not do this, they become completely furious when they hear that Christ is called God, while there is a clear text in this place; in order to avoid this, they resort to the most trivial distortions.

Thus the Arians, who took offense at this article, said that Christ, according to one of his two natures, was a person who stood in the middle between the natural Godhead and the created nature of the angels. They therefore ascribed to him the name of the Godhead, but denied the same in fact, for [they said,] although he was not essentially and by nature God, he was not God.

1) Jenaer: merani instead of: miram in the other editions.

If he was the most perfect creature, created before all other creatures, and through him all others were created. But what kind of wisdom is this, to depart from the word, and to invent something from his head, and to decorate this afterwards with evil twisted scriptures, in order to give it a semblance? So I could also invent and falsify any thing. Therefore these are very hateful people, who think that this is a special art, which others do not possess, that they first conceive something that agrees with reason, and then confirm it with Scripture. [Thus they do with] Sirach 1, 4. [Vulg.]: "Rather than all things was wisdom created." There is the word "created," so Christ is a creature 2c. For seeing that they were cornered by Scripture, they said that after (post) the natural Godhead was created the Word, or the very lightest and most beautiful Wisdom of GOD, by which GOD thereafter created all things. This is indeed an excellent wisdom, which all deceivers have used. For Mahomet also invented that he was God's neighbor, and that God spoke to him as to his son; so a Franciscan worships his rule and his Franciscus as an idol.

But I tell this so that you see that nothing is easier than to think up and invent something new. Thus the Samosatians invent, 2) the word is not a person, but the word signifies the natural intellect (intellectionem) of God, the spirit signifies the divine movement. All this is easy because they are philosophical things that can be understood with reason and do not need faith. Nor do they agree with faith, but can be conceived and understood by a heathen and godless man, nay, by a child of ten years. For after the foundation is laid that God is only One, it is easy to invent this from the word that passes into the heart and from the divine movement. For this agrees with reason that One cannot be threefold. But

2) Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch in 260 AD.

What kind of faith is this that even reason can attain? But what kind of action is this, that afterwards, in order to confirm the imagination of reason, one misuses the word of God?

Therefore know this first, that the articles of faith are in truth sayings of such things as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man [1 Cor. 2:9], and are taught and understood by the Word and the Holy Ghost alone. And this is the nature of all the articles of faith, that all reason has an abhorrence of them, as we see in the Gentiles and the Jews. For without the Holy Spirit they cannot be understood, for they are the depths of divine wisdom, in which reason is utterly drowned and put to death. Therefore, whoever wants to be a Christian, let him pluck out his eyes from his reason, and hear only what God speaks, and give himself up to God, saying: "Although what I hear is incomprehensible and unbelievable to me, nevertheless, because God has said it and confirmed it with mighty miracles, I believe it for this reason.

Therefore, fasten your consciences in this article: Christ is God, and do not dispute much. The text is clear: "For he is the LORD your GOD, and you shall worship him." It does seem that it can be eliminated by misinterpretation: David was also worshipped, therefore worship is not something peculiar to God alone. But the testimonies of Scripture are of two kinds. Some give the explanation badly (*sumta sunt a priori*), and quite obviously say that Christ is the Son of God and true and natural God, as many of them are in John. If anyone wants to overturn these, let him know that they must be overturned with the holy Scriptures, and not with human reason. What can be clearer than that he says [John 1:1], "In the beginning was the Word," likewise [v. 3], "All things that are made were made by this Word. He does not say that the Word was made, but that all things were made by the Word; thus the Word itself was not made, but always was. But this is clear, and dealt with by us elsewhere.

After that other testimonies are derived

(*a posteriori*), that is, taken from the effects, as Paul [1 Cor. 15, 25. 27.] clearly says that the Son rules over everything, as it is also said in the Psalm [Ps. 8, 7.]: "You have put everything under his feet." Likewise [Ps. 110:1], "Sit thou at my right hand." Likewise in John, where he says [Cap. 10, 30.] that he is like the Father, that all that the Father has is his [Joh. 16, 15.], that what the Father does he also does [Joh. 5, 17. 20. ff.], makes alive, justifies 2c. These are derived reasons of proof (*argumenta a posteriori*), which prove that Christ is God, because he claims equality with God for himself, and reason can muster nothing against this, except philosophical things and things that are in accordance with reason, or also quite rapturous. But I call philosophical things those which anyone can easily understand and invent. But I ask you, does this mean to teach faith, which has to do with things that are not before the eyes and that are not seen? That is, with the things which we cannot obtain in this life, but which must be believed until they are revealed in their time; but now they are invisible. Therefore, this passage is one of the most distinguished ones, in which the Jews and other swarming spirits are annoyed beyond measure that the prophet calls Christ God, to whom Moses and the law must give way. And if the church today also had laws, which were ordered by the Holy Spirit, then one would also have to say: Let the church depart, let those laws depart, so that this King may be exalted above all, for to Him belongs praise and honor, and as it says here: "He is your God, whom you shall worship." For the words here are set quite properly, because the prophet is not dealing here with the histories, as it is said of David in the history [2 Sam. 14, 4.] that he was worshipped, but he is dealing here with the doctrine and the highest article of faith. Therefore, "worship" here actually refers to the worship of God, of which it is said in the first commandment: "Him alone you shall worship," where it certainly speaks of the worship of God.

Therefore, in the eyes of the Gentiles and the Jews, it is an offence that Christ has been attacked.

The first commandment says that only one God is to be worshipped. But it is salutary and comforting to us, so that our conscience may not speak: I hear that one must leave the righteousness of the law, but how? if I become an idolater, if I worship Christ as God, contrary to the first commandment, which commands that one should worship only One God? The Holy Spirit therefore fortifies us here and in other places against this thought, and explains the first commandment as if he wanted to say: You hear in the first commandment that only One God is to be worshipped, or God will punish idolatry to the third and fourth degree; therefore you fear to leave the first table. On the other hand, here you also hear the prophecy that Christ is to be worshipped; you must not leave this one either, because the same God is also speaking here. Here you are hanging between the door and the hinge, you want to leave either the first commandment or this prophecy. Therefore hear me, and worship Christ confidently; the first commandment will remain unharmed for you, the divine unity will also remain unharmed for you. You will not err, but confidently forsake all divine and human, and worship only this Christ. Cling to him completely and then you will cling to the true and unified God.

Thus, only Gentiles who believe in Christ are assured and made sure that we are not mistaken, but that we are pleasing God in the highest way, if we believe in and confess His Son, Jesus Christ, the true, unified and natural God. If we are not able to understand that there is one God and three persons, let us leave it to him, but let us incline our ears. He himself says that our King is God and commands that we worship him. Therefore we should believe that he is our God, and so there will be no danger that we will practice idolatry and worship a false god. But if you reject this King in the foolish superstition that you might violate the first commandment, then you have rejected the whole and true GOD, as the Arians have done. For while avoiding One Error, the foolish people run into the opposite errors. While they

they are actually doing against the first commandment, and while they are fleeing idolatry (as they call it), they are falling into twofold idolatry. The first commandment, they say, teaches that one should worship only One God, so it is idolatry to worship Christ. Thus, while they believe that it is a great sin to worship Christ, they commit a greater sin and take away Christ's divinity, thereby denying the true God.

Thus the wretched Zwingli first moved his listeners with the thunderclap that it was idolatry to believe that the bread was the body of Christ, who is God and man. When they heard this, the simple hearts at first thought for a while, but then they fell for it, caught by the fact that it seemed similar to the truth. For after the devil has taken away the word from our hearts and eyes, and causes us to consider the articles of faith without the word, then it is done with us. But thou sayest, I will not consider whether these things be true or not, but will simply believe, as Christ saith, "This is my body." If I am an idolater because of this belief, it is through guilt and at the peril of Christ, whose words are thus. He will therefore well (bene) defend me. For this is quite certain, as soon as we begin to doubt and dispute about any article of faith, we lose it, and fall into an ungodly delusion, as Eve fell, when she counseled with herself about God's commandment. "She also allowed herself to be advised on a misgiving, but she had already fallen." In the beginning she had the commandment in her mouth and defended herself splendidly against the devil, but after she began to mean it, she was already overcome. This is how it is with everyone.

Therefore you who study the holy Scriptures should be sure above all things what you must believe in the Christian religion, that you have well fortified the articles of faith with good sayings of the holy Scriptures, and consider them well. Then, if either the devil or his instruments, the heretics, want to dispute with you, have those words of the holy Scriptures against them; but let them go, and say, "Your pointed words are not good.

I do not want to listen to the speculations and thoughts (speculationes). For this says the Holy Spirit, who has reminded me to listen and to incline my ears; for a new and mighty doctrine is coming, in which many are offended, that all righteousness is to be abandoned, and only the one Christ and his righteousness are to be trusted and founded upon; then that this Christ is God by nature and is to be worshipped. Therefore, I am sure that I am not mistaken, and the reason for proof, which is asserted from the first commandment and from the prophets, that one should worship only One God, is nullified. If, on the other hand, they say: So you make several gods, I answer: I do not make another or several gods, but I say that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one and the same God. It is a substantial unity and one essence, although there are three persons; nor do I want to have several gods, because several gods contend with each other, nor can they be; but here is unity. But how the persons are distinguished, if I do not understand this, then the holy scripture is sufficient for me, which says it, and calls the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit by name, Matth. 28, 19. If I could grasp this with the reason or the senses, what would faith be necessary? what would it then need the scripture, which is revealed by God through the Holy Spirit? Now, if I do not want to believe anything other than what I can comprehend with reason, I will shortly lose baptism, the sacrament of the altar, the Word, grace, the knowledge of original sin, and everything, because reason understands nothing of these things. Thus we see that the Sacramentarians and the Anabaptists have lost all this, for of none of these do they teach rightly. Therefore the first care of a theologian should be to be well versed in the text (*bonus textualis*, as it is called), and first of all to hold fast this principle that one should not dispute or philosophize in sacred things; for if one were to act here with rational and probable grounds of proof, I could as easily pervert all the articles of faith as Arius, the Sacramentarians, and the Anabaptists.

Anabaptists. But in theology one must only hear, and believe, and hold fast in the heart: God is true, however inconsistent that may seem to reason, what God says in His word.

Thus he says in this place that this king (of whom we preach that he was born of the virgin and was a true man) is God by nature, because this word is attributed to God alone in the whole of Scripture in the form in which it stands here, and "worship" is such a service of God that also belongs to God alone. Therefore, instead of the old worship, which he commanded to be forgotten above, he here establishes another, new worship, and transfers the first commandment completely according to all its parts and syllables to this king. Worship this one, he says. Whoever does not worship this one will lack the right God, as if he wanted to say: Let no one complain, as if all worship had perished and been abolished. For that you have hitherto kept the ceremonies, sacrificed, done the holy ten commandments and other works of the law, I now leave undone; that may have been worship hitherto. But now a new worship will be, which is exceedingly pleasing to everyone and to me, the worship of this King, on whom I transfer the first commandment, commanding that you worship him; if you do this, then you have worshipped me, shown me the worship of God. For every one that divinely worships (*colit*) this king, he alone fulfills the first commandment, and no other, because I have commanded that he should sit at my right hand 2c.

Therefore, we must be at the will of God, who speaks to us of the Son whom he has revealed, so that we may be true worshipers, not as before, but in spirit and in truth, that is, in faith in his beloved Son. He who worships him worships me, he who despises him despises me, so that everything should be to the glory of this Son. And there is no danger that we should be idolaters. For the Father commands it, saying that if we worship the Son, we serve him, because he is one with the Son, and we cannot come to the Father in any other way or more surely than through

the Son and in the Son, in whom is all the fullness of the Godhead. Therefore, we cannot lack God, but with joy, gladness, confidence and with the greatest certainty we can worship this our King Christ, the Son of God, who is our Lord and true God, not a speculatum invented by the philosophers, but so called by God Himself.

So now it is the service of God, not to keep the ceremonies of Moses, the pope, the monks, the pagans, the Turks, but to worship this King, that is, to take hold of this King and believe that he is the Son of God, who suffered for us and rose from the dead; then to acknowledge him in fear, to accept his word and believe, and to do everything in faith in him for his glory, so that everything, as Paul [Col. 3, 17] is done in the name of Jesus. In this way we are all priests, clothed and adorned with the same holiness of Christ, which we receive by faith, much more beautiful than all the righteousness of the Old Testament and the Papacy. It is an excellent verse, therefore I command you the same.

V. 13. The daughter of Zor will be there with a gift; the rich among the people will plead before you.

Here he comforts the church with an external consolation, as it were. For it is difficult to believe in God without an example, and to be led by God as he led Abraham as an individual, and to see that all other peoples have an abhorrence of the religion you follow, and that you alone believe and follow something that is different from that of all other people. Therefore, since the Holy Spirit foreknew that this thing would produce great weakness, he comforts the church, saying, "I will make it so: Since you are so beautiful in my sight, and serve me in pure faith, forsaking all your righteousness, I will give happiness and prosperity to your preaching of me, so that the best part of the world will accept it; so that, although the whole world disputes the gospel, the nations rage, the peoples counsel, the kings rebel against you, yet some of the nobles, kings, princes, and wise men of the world will join themselves to you, and preach the gospel.

Accept the word. For God wants to have his own tithes from the great multitude of kingdoms and nations. But this would be impossible, if it would not happen by the divine blessing. Because it is a completely inconsistent and unbelievable sermon. Therefore it is condemned by the world as a heretical, blasphemous and idolatrous one. But God always converts some people through this doctrine of faith against all thinking and me, so that the church is increased, since there are always some who remain steadfast and shed their blood for this doctrine.

Therefore he says the same here as in another place [Ps. 8, 7.]: "You have put everything under his feet", and Is. 49, 23.: "The kings shall be your keepers." For God also sustains the church bodily, and that with necessity. For if we are to preach and confess Christ, this body also needs preservation; peace, nourishment and other necessities are needed. Therefore, if there were no prince anywhere to accept the gospel, there would be no place, no peace, no food, no clothing; the church would perish in a short time. Therefore, God raises up some princes who are favorable to the godly, give them abundantly and feed them. And they do this with great faith, as in the court of Nero Processus, Martinianus 1) and others who went to their deaths for the sake of Christ. This is God's work. Thus he promises here: You shall not be lonely, but I will also turn great princes to you, as He also says in Isaiah [Cap. 49, 21.]: "I was barren. Who begat me these?" 2c.

The daughter Zor (Tyri).

This is a Hebrew way of speaking, that is, Tyre itself. For what is "Zor" in Hebrew, I believe, is Tyre, since the change from Z to T is easy.

Will be there with gift (in muneribus).

It will bring you gifts, because he is talking about the worldly gifts. But he indicates, as I said above, that Tyre is to be converted to the church, and the word and

1) Lilaritrianus is missing in the Erlanger. - In the Jena one: "proeessus".

accept those heavy articles, and confess their faith with gifts and alms to the poor saints. Further I take Tyre after the figure of the synecdoche for all other mighty cities of the Gentiles. For Tyre was a very famous (nobilissima) city at the time of this psalm, just as if I said nowadays: Venice will receive the gospel and will mildly take care of the poor and afflicted Christians, so that the number of people in the church will increase.

The rich among the people will plead before you.

Wherever there will be any people and rich people, there will also be some who worship Christ for the sake of this word, and although it seems unbelievable, I will nevertheless give you people from all nations, who shall come and hear you preach with the highest joy and hold the word in honor 2c., as we see today that even in the courts of godless princes there are many devout men who, as truly godly people, hold the word in honor, serve the ministers of the word with humility, help the brethren with every service that is in their ability. This means confessing Christ with outward gifts and services. This has happened from the beginning of this preaching in the church and still happens. But it is a great comfort that the church, in the midst of tribulations and persecutions, should also have an outward comfort, and that the word should also be spread and preserved through the rich, just as there are few princes today who do not have some people in their courts who are favorable to the word and revere it.

Therefore, after admonishing the synagogue to leave the people, the Father's house, the law and everything, and promising that it would then be exceedingly beautiful and have infinite righteousness forever, with which it would be clothed by the King himself, not by the servant of Moses, but by its Lord and God Himself, he added this very necessary external consolation. For since the whole psalm is in figurative speech, this glorious praise cannot be seen otherwise than in the spirit, otherwise every single word will be seen as nothing but lies.

appear. For there is nothing less to be seen in the apostles and the Christians than the adornment of the king and the care of the rich, but the second psalm prevails, that the heathen rage, and the people rage.

Therefore, everything must be considered according to the spirit, but in such a way that even in truth daughters of kings will take care of this holy church, for otherwise it would be impossible that this kingdom should remain. For if GOD did not give a place where the word could be taught, if he did not give a prince who loved the gospel, the church would not last long. Therefore, while others rage and most of the world persecutes the gospel, God raises up people like David, Josiah, Hezekiah, and sometimes even a king of Babylon, so that there may be good peace and quiet for the ministry of the word and for the spreading of the word. With necessity, therefore, he comforts the church here that there will be no lack of saints and daughters of the church, even from the mighty and rich of the world, who will feed the church and be the patrons of the church, so that the word of the Psalm [Ps. 110, 2] will stand firm: "Rule among your enemies" 2c.

V. 14: The king's daughter is all glorious within; she is clothed in gold.

The Latin interpreter has translated this verse badly: [Omnis gloria ejus filiae regis ab intus, in fimbriis aureis, whereas it should read *Filia regis tota gloriosa est intus, et auro induta*. "The king's daughter" is a Hebrew idiom for the queen herself, as they also say: a child of death [2 Sam. 12, 5.], a child of the kingdom [Matth. 8, 12.], a son of the rock, a son of the cook [Klagel. 3, 13.] 2c. I take it now from the descendants that the queen, of whom he said above [v. 10.], is the synagogue itself, or the church called out of the old synagogue, but the king's daughter is the church gathered out of the Jews and Gentiles, so that out of the two peoples, the Jews and the Gentiles, One Body

1) The words in brackets are added by us. The relation is defective here; the following Latin translation is not that of the Vulgate, but of Luther.

as Paul also used to say. For it is a great thing and a glorious miracle, in which not only the Jews are offended, but all who are not Christians, that God does away with the respect of the person, and makes no distinction between us Gentiles, who live without law, and the Jews, who are weighed down with the burden of the law, makes no distinction between the Gentile Cornelius and the circumcised Moses, as is evident from the Acts of the Apostles [Cap. 10, 1. ff.].

It is therefore unheard of that this partition, which distinguished the Jews and the Gentiles and caused constant enmity, is so badly removed. For the Jews despised and condemned the Gentiles who lived without the Law; and the Gentiles, in turn, ridiculed and hated the Jews as a very extraordinarily superstitious people. This enmity, says God, I will abolish, and neither you who are circumcised nor you who are uncircumcised shall have any preference or be considered better, but he who believes in Christ. In this way neither a Jew can reproach the Gentile for his Gentile origin, nor a Gentile for his foolishness, and at the same time the holiness of the Jews and the wisdom of the Gentiles will be done away with, so that there is absolutely no difference, and all boasting is abolished. For even though salvation comes from the Jews [John 4:22] and not from the Gentiles, it does not remain with the Jews alone. I believe that the prophet is speaking of this astonishment, that the king's daughter is the offspring of the church, which began with the Jews and has been propagated to the Gentiles.

Another conception, although not much different from the previous one, is that the daughter of the queen 1) is not taken for the body of the church, which is gathered from Jews and Gentiles, but for the church of the Gentiles, which sprang from the church of the Jews, so that he indicates that this king will not be barren in marriage, but will have sons and daughters, as it says in Isaiah [Cap. 43, 6.]: Speak at midnight:

Give me sons 2c. For the church of the Jews is the queen, which is set up by the apostles. Through them he begat a daughter, the church of the Gentiles, as Paul says Apost. 13:46: "The word of God had to be spoken to you first, but now that you have rejected it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles." And in the first letter to the Corinthians, Cap. 4, 15: "I have begotten you through the gospel"; although you have many disciplinarians (for masters who teach good works can be found in many), yet only One is the Father who begets. For the Jews did not become Christians through the Gentiles, but the Gentiles through the Jews. Thus, he praises the reproduction of this kingdom through the birth of children until the end of the world.

The king's daughter is quite glorious inside.

That is, the church, which has been spread by this queen of the people of the Jews and has been enlarged by the holy apostles through the first church, is very splendidly and most beautifully adorned "inwardly", that is, in her woman's room (as we call it), so that the opinion is: In this queen's chamber there is nothing but gold, silver, purple, and silk; there are no weapons, no filth, but glory in garments of gold and silver 2c. For he has taken the image from a royal woman's room. He indicates that the church is adorned with various gifts, but especially with the gift of faith in Christ. For these are "the golden pieces". For as he said above [v. 10.] of the queen that she was adorned with gold, so here he says that the daughter of the queen is adorned with golden pieces. Therefore the church of the Gentiles has not less of Christ than the church of the Jews, but she is also clothed with the most precious gold, that is, with the righteousness of our Lord JEsu Christ, and with salvation, as she says in Isaiah Cap. 61, 10. "He hath clothed me with garments of salvation, and arrayed me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom with priestly: ornaments adorned, and as a bride in her jewels." For this is the wedding garment, of which he also speaks in the Gospel.

1) In the editions the text says: ülium reZinas, but in the margin: ülia re'is.

The most high confidence and righteousness, by which we are clothed with Christ himself as a gift. This is the gold, these are the golden pieces, which the church of the Gentiles received through the first church and the apostles.

V. 15: They bring her to the king in embroidered garments, and her companions, the virgins who follow her, they bring to him. 1)

Here the Latin interpreter has divided the verse incorrectly and rendered the meaning badly. For it is to be read thus: *Deducitur ad regem in vestibus acupictis, et virgines sectantes eam, quae ei sunt proximae, adducuntur ad te.* But the meaning is: The church, which goes along so splendidly adorned in its women's room, where one neither enters nor leaves, but is the bridal chamber of the conscience, where the bridegroom and the bride alone rest, where everything is of gold: when this church is carried out to the round, it is dressed with embroidered garments. These are the gifts that follow the golden garment, which is faith. For after we are justified by faith, and clothed in pure and precious gold, other gifts of the Holy Spirit follow, which afterward work miracles in believers, teaching, admonishing, baptizing, 2c., as Rom. 12:6 and 1 Cor. 12:4 are written. In such adornment she is led to the round dance, into the public, where the king dances with her; and she is not only led to it, but the whole women's room, that is, the great multitude of the churches everywhere in the whole world, as he says:

And their playmates, the virgins 2c.

Everything is taken from the way it is at court, where the queen and the princesses (*reginulae*) have their servants, rather their comrades, namely the daughters of other princes who follow them. But it denotes both the ruling churches and the ruled ones. For GOD rules this kingdom in such a way that he gives apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, interpreters, governors 2c. 1 Cor.

1) *Vulgata: Circumamicta varietatibus. Adducuntur regi virgines post eam; proximae ejus afferuntur tibi....*

12, 28. For another gift is faith, another prophecy, another the gift of healing 2c. [1 Cor. 12:8, 9]. These differences of gifts remain in the church, and one has more of them than another. For not all the members of the body can be feet or hands or eyes 2c. So also he wills that the body of his church with different gifts and offices be joined together in beautiful harmony. This is not found among the swarm spirits and sectarians, where each one wants to be everything, foot, hand, eye, ear 2c.

Thus, here he depicts how the queen comes forth, having many virgins following her, each of whom walks along adorned with a different garment. But they are also led to the king, so that everything happens to will and serve this king. Thus the apostles teach Christ, the prophets, the teachers, the bishops, the pastors, the ministers who baptize, who administer the sacrament: all are led to Christ, so that they may believe and serve in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, each in his own way. For all, though they may differ in gifts, are of one mind and of one accord in the supreme article, that they are saved by faith in Christ, and by nothing else. Thus, when I am a teacher of the gospel, I do the same thing that Paul and Peter do. So does a pastor of the church at Antioch the same as the prophets do. They all follow Christ alone, do not want to know anything, hold (*sapere*) and preach as Christ crucified. Thus they agree in their most exquisite clothing, namely in faith, even though the colors are different, that is, they have different gifts. But the heretics go to hell on a different, own way under the name of Christ, and do not follow this queen, but their own opinions. But here in the true church there remains unity in faith, in word, in doctrine, in opinion, however different the gifts may be. For although the clothing is various, yet all come to the round, to the service, the honor and the splendor of the king, not to the whorehouse, like the heretics. But do they do so gladly? It follows:

V. 16: They are led with joy and gladness, and go into the king's palace.

Change [the futura in Latin] into tenses of the present. For he presents how the church and the people of God are led into the palace, to Christ himself, as it were to a round dance and royal banquet. Therefore, spiritual eyes are also needed here, as St. Agatha had. Since she was executed because she confessed Christ, she said that she would be led to the round dance and delicious banquet. Thus the church is exposed to all misfortunes and torments, and the individual Christians are either thrown into prison or assailed by sadness, temptations and torments; but they suffer all this with a happy conscience, because the Holy Spirit is with them, who makes them laugh at the wrath and rage of the world and the whole devil with all his terrors, so that they also go into the perils with joy.

How is it, then, that Christians remain steadfast in so many temptations, inward and outward torments, and yet do not deny Christ? Certainly, because they know that they are in the service of their King Christ: They know that they are in the service of Christ, their King, and that they will be led to him with glorious splendor. So I too would not preach a single sermon in public if I were not cheered up by such promises that Christ lives and is our Lord. For this produces a certain confidence that we can think like this: If this is true, that Christ is our Lord and King, we may then with cheerful and unbroken courage let ourselves be killed or robbed. This is the spiritual round dance of which the prophet here speaks, in which there is gladness, not a natural or carnal, but a supernatural and spiritual, which overcomes the terrors of death and laughs at the raging of hell and the devil and his members. For the church must be instructed by faith, which is the golden garment; then it must be adorned with love and patience, that it may glory in tribulation, so that when anyone suffers persecution for the word's sake, he may say, "Quite right, this is what I sought with my preaching, that I should conquer the world and

The devil wanted to excite against me; therefore I will not desist. This is how this round dance is danced.

The bride guides who lead the queens are the servants of the church. They comfort her and tell her to be of good cheer; it seems to the flesh that this is death, but in truth it is life; it seems to us that we are abandoned by God in the cross: It seems to us that we are abandoned by God in the cross, but then we are most loved and protected by God. For whom He loves, He chastens [Hebr. 12, 6.], so that He may make salvation out of the cross, life out of death, honor out of shame, and prosperity out of suffering, as Paul used to say, 2 Cor. 4, 8-10: "We have tribulations everywhere, but we are not afraid; we are afraid, but we do not despair. We suffer persecution, but we are not forsaken; we are oppressed, but we do not perish; and we always bear the death of the Lord Jesus in our bodies, so that the life of the Lord Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies" 2c. Thus, the Bride Leaders lead the Church and fortify it with the words of faith and the consolations of the Holy Spirit and raise it up: Wait out and trust. But it is a great art to know that this is the round dance of the Christians, when the heart fidgets because of the bitterest hatred of the world, in the temptation of the devil and sin, as Paul [2 Cor. 12, 7.] complains about the stake and Satan's angel. It is a hard round dance, and impossible to the flesh; yet it must be performed, so that we must exhort ourselves, and speak as that one said, Here make a dance. The promises are the flutes, the servants of the word are the dancers who lead the virgins. These two pieces can alleviate this harsh round dance. For the Church has no other joy than the Word. Thus, through this joyful image, the Holy Spirit has willed to delineate the afflicted Church. Therefore, when you are at a round dance, think: Behold, this virgin is the image (*incedit in allegoria*) of some troubled and afflicted church. The leader of the round dance is the preacher, the flutes are the promises of Christ and the angels. But these are spiritual eyes that see such things in tribulation.

V.17. Instead of your fathers you will have children, and you will make them rulers over the earth.

Here he goes out of the synagogue and says about the descendants of this king, who will not only have the kingdom in the Jewish people, but in the whole earth, through the whole world. Christ will have his baptismal font, his pulpit from which he teaches, his apostles and teachers in cities and villages, even if there are only one or two who believe. So the name of Christ, so the altar on which the Sacrament is administered, will not only be spread far and wide, but will also date in length, so that Christ and His name will be found in all corners throughout the world. So also among the Turks are people who have faith in Christ and baptism, and the same golden robe and gifts, even though they are oppressed by the Turk. There have always been some believers under the papacy, and there are still believers whom we do not know, whom God receives through the Word and the sacraments, even though the devil and the pope do not like to see it. Salvation comes from the Jews [John 4:22], and the Jews are the fathers, as he calls them here; but because they do not want to agree with the Gospel, other children are born in their place. For the Gentiles are converted to the faith and cling to Christ; they are grafted into the olive tree whose branches are broken and cut off, as Paul says [Rom. 11:19].

You will set them as princes 2c.

But these are miserable "princes". So he also uses the names "kingdom" and "king's children" and "queen", but all this is very secret and hidden from the eyes of men. Therefore it is called a mystery [Rom. 16, 25.], likewise the kingdom of heaven [Matth. 13, 11.], and princes in heaven [Joh. 8, 37.], but not a kingdom and princes on earth. Thus the apostles and all other ministers of the Word are bishops. But who of us dares to believe this, and to presume that he is one of the heavenly princes fei? And yet, it is so; I and all the other godly

Teachers are princes. But it seems to be an intemperate hopefulness to take this for oneself; but it is not hopefulness, for it is to the honor of the king. For since he himself is the king of honors and of heaven, those who enter his service are his councilors and great princes, even if they do not believe that they are such great people. For just as the emperor Carl has his electors, the Turk his satraps, the pope his cardinals, so also our king has great princes for servants. Augustine is a prince in heaven, so are Quadratus, Irenaeus and others also princes and counts; so also we who teach the gospel today. But before the world we are "the most despised," and are represented as the children of those who are given over to death, as a sacrifice of sweepings and a curse of the world [1 Cor. 4:9, 13.], as an abomination and mockery of men, as a curse and contempt of the people [Psalm 22:7.]. Such people we are, if we esteem ourselves after the manner in which the peasants, nobles, princes, and wise men of the world esteem us; but we must not follow their judgment of us, but rather suffer ourselves to be killed. For if I consider rightly who I am, I find that I have been baptized and placed by God in the preaching office of God; therefore, without a doubt, I am also found among the estates of this realm.

This is for our consolation, that we should see and believe that the church is highly esteemed in the eyes of God, and is a queen of an eternal kingdom, a victor over death and sin by the grace and gift of her Bridegroom and King, and that we are in this kingdom, in which there is dominion over death and the devil; our King also has his princes, princes, counts 2c. We also want to be in their number and boast of such high dignity, even though we are poor in the world, even though nobles and peasants trample us underfoot and spit at us. But in the eyes of God, where there are infinitely greater princes than the princes of the world, one is a count, another a duke, another a prince.

It is true that the powerful in the world laugh at us when they hear such things from us, and when they want to mock the poverty of our pastors, they call them Lutheran bishops, as well as

Some want to show their wit by saying, when they want to speak of us in an exceedingly contemptuous way, "He is a theologian. This name shall only mean as much with them as if they said: He is a fool and I don't know what. But they may have good days, collect treasures and be highly esteemed, yet they will experience the judgment of God in his time and see how true it is what the prophet says here: "You will make them princes." Yes, a part of this dignity begins already in this life. For neither any princes, nor the pope, nor the jurists are able to teach rightly even of one estate how it is constituted before God; as we see that before the word, which now shines brightly, came to light, when it came to dying, these people mourned and complained about their estate, as if it had been godless. But there is no doubt that those who gave and taught laws possessed as much sagacity and intelligence as those who ridicule theology today possess, and that they nevertheless did not know this, which is not so great that they could have passed a certain judgment on the estates (*vitae generibus*). The same was not known by those who wrote philosophical books. Therefore, when it is necessary to judge a matter before God, no wisdom, no laws, no philosophy can judge, but only the spiritual prince of whom he speaks here. They must seek and hear comfort from him, ask him for absolution and other spiritual services. Then they must humble themselves and throw themselves at the feet of these princes, even if they are the greatest kings and the wisest men. Furthermore, it is better in the sight of God for someone to be the regent of three villages in spiritual judgment than to be the emperor of Turkey. For the Holy Spirit does not lie, who calls them princes set by God.

So now you have described this whole king quite gloriously with the whole government of the kingdom and best reproduction until eternity. Now he concludes his song. Now Moses shall cease, he says, there shall be further

Nothing else will be preached and taught than this King, who is such a Beatificator; of him alone will we sing. So he closes in the same way as he began, and the wreath that he has woven and finished, he summarizes here as if to say: As I said at the beginning that I would sing of a king and praise him, so I sing at the end and praise him:

V. 18. I will remember your name from child to child; therefore the nations will give you thanks forever and ever.

As if he wanted to say: This shall be the man of whom to sing, to teach, to preach, and to praise forever, of whose name never to be silent. So will I remember thy name, O Lord, that thou mayest be praised and glorified for ever. This is the only and most delicious service of the New Testament, to praise and extol this Son of God with singing, writing and preaching. This service is at the same time a sacrifice of praise and death. For the sake of this service, for the sake of this preaching, we suffer and are killed. Furthermore, because he says that the remembrance of the name of the Lord is the only worship, Moses is cut off and condemned and everything that exists anywhere in philosophical doctrines, so that in the church only the voice of the bridegroom should resound, and one should give thanks to this king and praise him. This must happen and will never cease until the end of the world, when this King of ours will come and show himself to us face to face. In the meantime, we princes rule only by preaching and ministering the Word, likewise with consolations and the sacraments, and this is "remembering the name of the Lord". In the meantime, let the world laugh at us that we have nothing but the mere word and are very sorrowful and miserable; but let us await our King. When his wedding is finished, we shall see that we are led into his bridal chamber, and there abide with him and live forever. Amen.

17) Interpretation of the 51st Psalm. *)

Explained in lectures in 1532, published in 1538.

Newly translated from the Latin.

The psalm Miserere mei Deus.

For Christ's glory and for the benefit of the Church, this glorious interpretation of the venerable Father D. Martin Luther on the fifty-first Psalm has been published.

Last spring we 1) interpreted the second Psalm about the King Christ and his spiritual and heavenly kingdom, how he is received in this world, how he is afflicted and maltreated by kings and nations and yet triumphs and triumphs; but now I have resolved to interpret the Psalm Miserere, which deals with repentance. I cannot promise that I will be able to do justice to this lecture, for I confess that I do not have the spirit of repentance.

1) Here we have followed the reading of the Wittenberg and the Jena edition: *proximo vere*. The Erlangen edition offers *proxime*. Compare the first note to No. 10 in this volume.

have not yet fully grasped who is speaking there, but [let us take the psalm before us,] only so that we may have opportunity and material to reflect and learn, so that I may become a disciple with you and await the Spirit. What he will bestow, let us accept with thanksgiving.

However, the knowledge of this psalm is necessary and useful in many respects. For it contains the teaching of the most important articles of our religion: of repentance, of sin, of grace and justification, as well as of the service we must render to God. These are divine and heavenly teachings. If the same are not with rei

*) As Veit Dietrich says in his dedication of this writing to Bernhard and Hieronymus Baumgärtner, patricians and councilors of Nuremberg, Luther interpreted this Psalm in 1532 in public lectures at the University of Wittenberg. From Luther's own statement at the beginning of the interpretation of this Psalm we learn that it first followed that of the second Psalm, and in the introduction to the 45th Psalm he remarks that he let the explanation of this Psalm follow that of the 51st Psalm because, as he had already said before, he had to select individual Psalms for interpretation, since he was not able to explain the whole Psalter in order or even a whole book because of his state of health and the amount of his business. This explanation of the 51st Psalm was also copied by the listeners and, at the request of many lovers of Luther's writings, published in 1538 by Veit Dietrich under the title: *Enarratio Psalmorum LI. Miserere mei Deus, et CXXX. De profundis clamavi. Per D. Mart. Lutherum nunc recens in lucem aedita. (Cum praef. Viti Theodori, ad Bernhardum et Hieronymum Baumgartneros, Patricios et Senatores Reip. Norib.) Adjecta est etiam Savonarolae meditatio in Psalmum LI. M. D. XXXVIII*. At the end: *kiniit VuittenborAuo prima octobris 1533*. This last date undoubtedly refers to the time when Luther finished the 130th Psalm, one of the "Songs in the Higher Choir" (compare the note on the end of the 130th Psalm in our edition, Vol. IV, Col. 2067). About the latter Psalm Dietrich says in the note: "So that I would not give both brothers only one gift and, as the Germans say in the proverb, make two sons-in-law with one daughter, I have added the 130th Psalm, which fits very well because of the similarity of the content. This letter is dated: "From the parish house of St. Sebald on the day of the Holy Trinity sl6. A reprint of Dietrich's edition appeared in Strasbourg in 1539, without indication of the printer, under a similar title, but after the words: "in kkgllrnnin 1, 1." there is still the indication: "Euro prnekutiono bntberi." A German translation by Georg Major was published in 1539 in Wittenberg by Hans Frischmut. The script is found in Latin in the Wittenberg (1549), torn. III, col. 501b; in the Jenaer (1570), torn. IV, loi. 370b (without the attribution of Veit Dietrich); and in the Erlanger, exo.j. opx", torn. XIX, p. I. Major's German translation is found in the Wittenberger (1553), vol. III, p. 338b; in the Altenburger, vol. VI, p. 1266; and in the Leipziger, vol. VI, p. 170. Like Walch, we also leave out Dietrich's attribution, as well as the four-page long Latin poem by Thomas Venatorius "on the power of original sin and on the grace and mercy of God against sinners" found in the Erlangen edition. We have re-translated according to the Erlangen edition, which printed the original text, comparing the Wittenberg and Jena editions.

As we see that this doctrine has been treated by our adversaries with great difficulty in many and immensely large tomes, and yet there is not one among them all who rightly understands what repentance, what sin, what grace is, but these words are to them like a kind of dream, of which there are still some traces in the heart, but the whole thing has disappeared from their hearts and eyes. But this is the cause of such great blindness and ignorance, that the right knowledge of these articles does not depend on the knowledge and wisdom of human reason, nor, I say, is it born in our house, in our hearts, but is revealed and given from heaven. For what man could speak of repentance and forgiveness of sins as the Holy Spirit speaks in this psalm?

In general, this psalm has been called a penitential psalm, and among all of them it is most often used in churches and for daily prayers; and the one who first gave it this name certainly had an understanding. But the rest of the people, who either pray it daily or pray it to perform the works imposed by the bishops, have not understood it at all. For they have applied this psalm to repentance for works done, or to the sin of the deed, which they describe as consisting in speaking, doing or thinking against the law of God. But this description is much too narrow to show the greatness of sin and its power. For sin must be looked at more deeply, and the root of ungodliness or sin should have been more clearly indicated, not stopping at the acts produced by the soul, *actibus elicitis*, 1) as they are called. From this error, that sin is not rightly recognized, another error arises, as it is wont to happen, that it is also not understood what grace is. Hence it came that they

were quite incapable of raising fearful consciences and comforting minds against the death and judgment of God. For how can he comfort who does not understand what grace is? Therefore, they fell into the foolish things of advising people who were in the throes of conscience to put on caps, to follow monastic rules, and similar foolish things by which, they thought, God could be reconciled. But these are obvious testimonies that they understood neither sin nor grace correctly and taught a rational theology based on reason without the word of God.

In this way they also taught about repentance, that people should gather up the transgressions of the whole past year, and grieve over them, and atone for them with atonements. But I ask you, does a judge not hang a thief because he hears that he has confessed the theft and sees that he is sorry? and these people think that God has done enough in this way, namely, if they thus invent a pain, if they dress differently, walk differently, eat differently. Therefore, the lecture on this psalm will be mainly useful for us to learn to understand these main points of our doctrine correctly, and to refute our opponents, who bring up such false things (*impure*) about the most important matters, in an erudite and convincing way. For in my own example I have experienced, when at times my conscience was in anguish, how their loose speeches could bring no help at all. However, I have very often exhorted the church to thank God for this immensely great gift of the Word and the pure teaching that, after this darkness has been dispelled, He has allowed the bright light of the Word to shine.

But now let us come to the Psalm. Here the doctrine of right repentance is presented to us. But there are two parts to right repentance: the recognition of sin and the recognition of grace, or, to use more familiar terms, the fear of God and the confidence in His mercy. David holds these two pieces before us in this prayer, as it were in a Lord's Prayer.

1) Cf. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. IV, Col. 868, § 11.

I have the paintings, so that they may look at me. For in the beginning of the psalm I see how he is in distress because of the knowledge of sin and the burden of his conscience, but at the end he comforts himself with confidence in the goodness of God and promises that he will also instruct others so that they will convert. Thus it is clear that the prophet, out of special counsel, wanted to leave behind in this psalm the right wisdom of divine religion, which is presented in right words and in the right sense, so that we might learn what is sin, what is grace, what is complete repentance. And of this kind are other psalms, such as the [32nd] psalm, "Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven," likewise [Ps. 130], "Out of the depths I cry unto thee, O Lord." For in the recital of this doctrine David is a master, but in such a way that in the use of this doctrine he remains a disciple with us, because all men, however much they are enlightened by the Holy Spirit, nevertheless remain disciples of the Word. They remain under the word and subject to the word, and experience that they can hardly draw a droplet from the great sea of the Holy Spirit.

I have given the content and the order of the psalm in a few words, now I must also speak of the title. But the history is known from the second book Samuelis, Cap. 12. Therefore, it is not doubtful to me that this title gave the school theologians the reason to understand the Psalm only from the person of David and from his sins. For David seems to speak only of his own person and of his own sin of adultery and death. But it is to be wondered at that they did not also teach that this Psalm should be prayed only for the sake of this one sin, but allowed it to be taken as an example and prayed in all other sins, as Paul says [1 Tim. 1, 16]. The Lord Jesus showed all patience in me as an example to those who would believe in him, since not all persecutors of the church believed, but Christ showed His long-suffering, kindness and infinite mercy to Paul, so that others would not despair in sins. In this way they also have this psalm

as an example of prayer in all sins, although they understood it only from David's sin, which the title names.

But we must go further and not stop at the outward sins, but look at the whole nature of sin, the source and origin. For the psalm speaks of the whole sin or the root of sin, not only of the outward work, which grows like a fruit from the tree of sin and the root. For the fact that he complains that he was conceived in sins [v. 7] does not only refer to adultery, but to the whole nature, which is stained with sin, and yet I do not dislike the fact that David's deed is presented as an example. For in this deed one sees more sins than the one committed with Bathsheba. For to his adultery he added an exceedingly evil counsel. He pronounces the verdict [2 Sam. 12, 5. 6.] that the man who took the sheep from his poor neighbor was a child of death, while he himself did not see his sin, which he committed by killing Uriah (a man who was undoubtedly good and of great loyalty to his king), likewise by snatching his spouse from him, but still wanted to be considered a holy man who loved justice and righteousness. But this is called committing a twofold sin. Then not only did he instigate the shameful death of Uriah, but other Israelites also perished because of it. The name of the Lord was blasphemed, and so he went beyond the fifth and sixth commandments, and also sinned against the first, second and third commandments, and would not have left the fourth commandment, of obedience to parents, untransgressed, if it had stood in his way, as he desired adultery. And indeed God reproaches him especially for the sin of blasphemy [2 Sam. 12, 14.]: "You have blasphemed the children of Ammon." For by the defeat of his people the hearts of the Gentiles became hopeful against the people and the God of Israel, so that they cried out that the God of Israel was nothing, but the God of the Ammonites was God and had the victory. Therefore

David is a very special example, who thus acts in turn almost against all the holy ten commandments, and yet would not have recognized these sins if Nathan had not come, but he still wanted to be considered a righteous and holy king.

Explained in this way, the sin of David is a tremendous example of grace and sin, and truly, if the holy Scriptures had not described this history, who could ever have believed that such a holy man could have fallen so low? He had arranged the service of the tabernacle with the greatest care through the Holy Spirit, he had honored this service with exceedingly holy songs, he had waged very important wars with great fortune, God had pronounced that he was a chosen man, and he had the most glorious promise of the future Seed or Christ, whom the prophets called David's son and King David. What need is there of many words? No cause can be brought forward why he cannot rightly be compared to Moses and Samuel, and yet such a great man does not fall into just one small sin, but into several great grievous sins at the same time, and what is most dangerous, he falls into impenitence and great security, so that if Nathan had not come, David might have sinned against the Holy Spirit.

That such a great man, who is full of the Holy Spirit, who has the highest good works and divine wisdom, and is famous before others for the glorious gift of prophecy, should fall so shamefully, is an example to us, so that we may have comfort when we, hurried by sins, fall, or when our consciences are struck by the feeling of God's wrath and judgment. For here shines forth in a glorious example the goodness and mercy of God, who is ready to forgive sins and make us righteous, if only we do not put this lid on it, that we say we have not sinned; as Saul's history shows. Even though he had sinned against the word of the Lord, he would have been forgiven if he had not added the defense of sin and said, 1 Sam.

15:13: "I have fulfilled the word of the Lord." When he was admonished a second time, he stubbornly denied it, saying [v. 20], "I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me." Therefore he must hear from Samuel the sad judgment [v. 23], "Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee, that thou shouldest not be king." As if to say: The LORD is indeed willing to forgive sins, but to those who recognize their sins and yet do not despair, but believe there is open to them the return to the GOD who promised forgiveness of sins to those who repent 2c.

Therefore, although this psalm speaks of the whole nature of sin and its source, we do not exclude the history that the title indicates, namely the adultery and the death stroke committed against Uriah. For in these sins of his David sees, as in a mirror, the impurity of the whole nature, so that he thinks: Behold, I who have so well administered the kingdom (republicam), who have established the church and the service, and ruled the people with all diligence, Ps. 78, 72. how have I fallen into so great abominations, into so many and such great sins! Through one sin he comes to the knowledge of the whole sin, as if he wanted to say: If I, such a great man, have fallen in such a way, as it were, from heaven to hell, is not this fall a great proof to me and to other people that there is nothing good in my flesh? It is therefore great wisdom that we know that we are nothing but sin, and do not think so little of sin as the teachers of the pope, who describe sin in such a way that sin consists in words, works or thoughts contrary to the law of God. Rather, according to this psalm, describe it in such a way that sin is everything that is born from father and mother before man is old enough to be able to speak, do or think anything; but from this root (to say so) nothing good can grow out in the sight of God. Hence comes the division of sin. For first, the whole nature is corrupted by sin and subjected to eternal death; second, there is another or a subspecies of sin, which the man who has the

Law has, can recognize, namely if theft, adultery, murder 2c. is committed. The civil rights also speak of this latter type, although not quite precisely.

That the school theologians therefore say that the natural powers (*naturalia*) are intact is a great blasphemy, although it is even a greater blasphemy that they judge the same of the devils. For if the natural powers were uncorrupted, why would one need Christ? Furthermore, if man by nature has a good will, if he has a right mind, to which the will, as they say, can be conformed by natural powers: what is it, after all, that was lost in paradise through sin and had to be restored by the Son of God alone? And yet, in our time, some who are considered teachers of theology (*magistri theologi*) defend this opinion that the natural powers are intact, that is, that the will is good; and if, through malice, it sometimes wills or thinks something other than what is right and good, they attribute this to the malice of men, not simply to the will as it is in itself. Against these dangerous opinions the heart must be fortified, so that the knowledge of grace is not obscured, which cannot possibly remain healthy and unharmed if we think of the nature of man in this way. Now this cannot be tolerated in any way in the church, that the school theologians teach that man can keep the law (*facere*) according to the essence of the doing (*quoad substantiam facti*), but not according to the intention of the one who is doing (*quoad intentionem praecipientis*). For according to the intention of the doer, not only the work is required, but also the state (*habitus*) in the heart, which is called grace. This is just as much as if I said that he who has healthy hands and feet can do his work properly, but this is prevented by the fact that he is not at the same time clothed with a black or white coat. In this way they say that God demands much more than the holy ten commandments, and is not satisfied if someone fulfills the ten commandments, but also demands the [above-mentioned] condition (*habitus*). All these tremendous

The things that are so bad have arisen from the fact that they did not know what sin is. But I am telling you this for the sake of seeing what a great difference there is between our true doctrine and the whimsical and lying doctrine of the pope.

For we say in this way: the natural powers are corrupted to the utmost. For when Adam was created, he had a right will and understanding; he heard right (*integre*), he saw right, he did earthly things in a right way for God's glory and in faith in Him. But afterwards, through the fall, the will, the understanding and all natural powers are so corrupted that man is no longer incorrupt (*integer*), but is perverted by sin, since he has lost the right judgment before God, and in all things has a perverse desire against the will of God and His law, since he no longer recognizes or loves God, but flees and fears Him, and believes that He is not God, that is, that He is not merciful and good, but a judge and a tyrant. From this loss of the knowledge of God arise innumerable other sins, so that people, when they are well, surely sin, like our adversaries, who persecute the Word trusting in their power. Furthermore, they believe that God has such a will that they themselves, through their diligence and devotion, can earn Him and reconcile Him with themselves. Hence the monasteries, the rules, the caps, the ropes, the masses, the pilgrimages and similar foolish services, which nature, deprived of the knowledge of God, has invented against the Word and without it. Are these not certain signs that the natural powers (concerning God and God's service) are completely corrupted? In the Old Testament, the same is proven by the various idolatries, the contempt for the prophets and the Word of God, and similar sins that God punishes the ungrateful people through the prophets.

But not even in civil matters can we claim that the natural powers are intact. For we see how great is the contempt for the laws, which after all command what is right, and how great the decay of good discipline, for the sake of which the laws and the authorities are ordained by God. Thus

a physician often deceives himself in the mixture of medicines and sometimes kills a sick person through his ignorance. Yes, the light of the eyes, the ears, and other limbs have all been afflicted by sin, and are no longer as healthy and unharmed as they were in Adam before sin. This corruption of the senses is evident; how, then, do you think it is with spiritual things? We are therefore turned away from God through sin, so that we do not imagine anything of God, but simply think of Him as an idol. Cicero and other great men in the regiment, if you look at the things, managed their office well, but if you look at their hearts, you will see that they were moved to it by nothing else than by ambition, as this famous saying testifies: *Mentem tu sola peruris gloria* [Honor, you alone pass through the heart]. But is this not also an obvious sign that the knowledge of God is lost, whom we should serve through obedience, but not seek our own honor? But now it is quite different, that we do not seek God's glory, but our own glory in God and all creatures. Thus, even those people who excelled in abstinence and temperance had honor as their primary goal in mind, to which they aimed, but not the will of God.

So this is our sin, that we are conceived and born in sins. David learned this from his own experience, therefore he describes it in such a way that he indicates that sin is a corruption of all powers, the inner and the outer, to such an extent that now no member performs its service as it did in paradise before the sin; but we have departed from God, have an evil conscience, are subject to sickness and death, as the words of the punishment indicate [Gen. 2:17]: "Whichever day thou eatest of this tree, thou shalt surely die." But we learn this from the word alone. But the heathen, who have not the word, have not rightly known these things, though they were in the midst of these evils. For they judged that death was a natural necessity, not a punishment of sin. Thus they cannot judge the whole nature of man.

because they do not know the source from which this misfortune has come upon the human race. The Psalm teaches about this knowledge of sin and the whole nature, and does not only treat the example (for which we are nevertheless grateful to the schools that they have still left it for us), but comprehends in itself the whole doctrine of the spiritual worship of God, of the knowledge of God, likewise of the knowledge of our nature, of sin, of grace 2c. Therefore, we are to believe that this Psalm is a general teaching for the whole people of God, from the beginning when it was made until this day, by which David, or rather the Holy Spirit in David, instructs us in the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But he teaches both gloriously, for he shows first of all sin in an excellent way, and then also the knowledge of grace, without which despair comes.

Furthermore, this recognition of sin is not a play with thoughts (*speculatio*) or a thought invented by the mind, but a real feeling, a real experience and a very heavy struggle of the heart, as he testifies when he says [v. 5]: "For I recognize my iniquity," that is, I feel it, I experience it. For this is what the Hebrew word actually means; it does not mean, as the pope taught, to reflect on what one has done, what one has omitted, but to feel and experience the burden of God's wrath, and the recognition of sin is precisely the feeling of sin, and a sinful man is the sinner who is oppressed by his conscience, and anxiously sways back and forth (*haeret*) and does not know which way to turn. For we are not dealing here with the philosophical knowledge of man, which describes man in such a way that he is a living being endowed with reason 2c. For this belongs to natural science and not to theology. Thus a jurist speaks of man in so far as he is an owner and master of his goods; the physician speaks of the healthy and sick man, but the theologian deals with the man who is a sinner. In theology, this is the essence (*substantia*) of man, and the theologian deals with this, that man may become aware of his nature corrupted by sins. If

this happens, despair follows, which pushes him into hell. For what shall man do before the face of the righteous God, who knows that the whole nature is oppressed by sin, and that there is nothing left on which he can rely, but has simply come to the point that he has nothing of righteousness? If this is felt in the heart in this way, then the other part of knowledge must follow, which must also not be in thought (*non speculativa*), but entirely in practice and in feeling, so that man may learn and hear what grace is, what justification is, that this is God's counsel over man who has fallen to hell in this way, that he has decided to lead man out again through Christ 2c. Here the bowed down heart is straightened again, and according to this doctrine of grace holds fast to it with joy: If I, as far as I am concerned, am a sinner, yet in Christ I am not a sinner made unto us for righteousness, but I am righteous and justified through the righteous and justifying Christ, who for this cause is and is called a justifier, because he belongeth to sinners, and is sent unto sinners 2c.

This is the twofold theological knowledge that David teaches in this Psalm, so that the content of this Psalm is: Of the theological knowledge of man, and of the knowledge of God, which is also a theological knowledge, so that no one may think about the majesty [of God], what God has done, and how powerful He is; likewise, so that one may not think of man as the master of his goods, as a lawyer does, or of the sick man, as a physician does, but of the man who is a sinner. For the actual object (*subjectum*) with which theology has to do is man, who is guilty of sin and lost, and God, who justifies and is the Savior of sinful man. Everything that is sought or discussed in theology apart from this subject is error and poison. For the whole of Scripture is intended to extol to us God's goodness, which He accomplishes through His Son, bringing back to righteousness and life the nature that has fallen into sin and condemnation. Here

Nothing is said about this bodily life, what food to eat, what works to do, how to govern one's family, how to cultivate the land 2c.; all this was created before man in Paradise, and given into the hand of man, when God said [Gen. 1, 28.]: "Rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, but here it is spoken of the future and eternal life, of God who justifies, restores and makes alive, and of man who has fallen from righteousness and life into sin and eternal death. Whoever follows this point of view (*scopum*) when reading the holy scriptures, will read the holy things with benefit.

Therefore, this theological knowledge is necessary so that man may know himself, that is, so that he may know, feel and experience that he is guilty of sin and condemned to death, but also so that he may know and experience the opposite, that it is God who makes such a man righteous and is a savior to him who thus knows himself. Let us leave the care of other people who do not recognize their sins to the legal scholars, physicians and parents. For these speak of man in a different way than a theologian. Now I will move on to the Psalm.

V. 3. God, be merciful to me according to your goodness, and blot out my sins according to your great mercy.

Here you are to remember in the beginning that you may not think that David speaks like a Turk (*Mahometistam*) or some heathen of God, because he calls God and does not mention Christ. For David speaks to the God of his fathers, or to the God who made the promise. For the people of Israel did not have a God conceived in and of itself (*Deum absolute speculatum*), so that I say, as the coarse people of the monks go up to heaven with their mental games, and think of God without any relation (*absolute*). This absolute God must be fled by all who do not want to be lost, because human nature and the absolute God (for the sake of teaching, we use this be-

The two names (the "God" and the "God") are the most bitter enemies among themselves, and it cannot be otherwise than that the weak humanity is crushed by such a great majesty, as the Scripture reminds us several times. Therefore, no one understands it as if David were speaking to the absolute God, but he is speaking to God, who is clothed and clothed with His words and promises, so that Christ will not be excluded from the name of God, about which God made the promise to Adam and the other patriarchs. This God, who is not only, but clothed and revealed by his word, we must take hold of, will certainly suppress the despair of lins.

And it is necessary to make this distinction between the prophets, who speak with God, and the pagans. For the pagans speak to God without the Word and the promises, according to the thoughts of their hearts, but the prophets speak to God, who is dressed in His promises and His Word and has revealed Himself through them. This God, who is dressed in such a kindly appearance and, that I may say, in such a lovely mantle, namely with His promises, can be grasped and looked upon by us with joy and confidence, while the absolute God, on the other hand, is like a brazen wall against which we cannot run without falling into ruin. Therefore, the devil goes about day and night to bring us to the point where we run up against the mere God, to make us forget the promises and the good deeds that he has shown in Christ, and to make us think of God and the judgment of God. When this happens, we are immediately lost and fall into despair. In this way, David does not speak to the absolute GOD, but he speaks to the GOD of his fathers, that is, to the GOD whose promises he knows and whose mercy and grace he has felt. Therefore, when a Turk, a hypocrite, or a monk says, "God, have mercy on me," this is just as much as if he said nothing, because he does not take hold of God, whom he calls, disguised in such a shell or appearance that is adapted to us, but takes hold of God and attacks him in his absolute power, where necessarily

Despair follows and Lucifer's fall from heaven to hell. This is the reason why the prophets based their prayers so firmly on the promises of God, because the promises include Christ and do not make God a judge or our enemy, but a kind and favorable God who wants to restore the damned to life and make them blessed.

I wanted to remind this first because of other passages of the prophets. After that, however, this is also to be considered, how it is true that he says: "Have mercy on me. For if one wants to look at the persons here, God and the sinful David, who have to do with each other, then the greatest disparity and an insoluble contradiction comes to light. For is it not the opinion of all nature, is it not the judgment of all men, that God hates sin? As John 9:31, the blind man says: "We know that God does not hear sinners, but if anyone fears God and does His will, He hears him." Similarly, in the holy Ten Commandments it is said: "I am a zealous God"; indeed, in the whole of Moses there is almost nothing but threats against the wicked and disobedient, and with the law of Moses there is the opinion of nature, which we cannot in any way discard. For this is the judgment of all men: You are a sinner, but God is just, so he hates you, so he will impose punishments, so he will not hear you. It is impossible that the whole of nature could deny this conclusion. Therefore, the holy fathers who wrote about the Psalms generally interpreted the words "righteous GOD" to mean that he justly repays and punishes, but not that he justifies. Therefore, it happened to me, when I was a young man, that I hated this naming of God, and from that ingrained habit (xxxx) or way it comes that even today I am as it were horrified when I hear that God is called just. So great is the power of ungodly teaching when hearts are poisoned with it from youth. And yet almost all the old teachers interpret it in this way.

But if GOD is just in such a way,

that he punishes righteously or repays according to merit, who then can stand before this righteous God? For we are all sinners and bring to God a just cause to inflict punishment upon us. Away, far away from here with such justice and such a righteous God, who will devour us all like a consuming fire! But because God sent Christ as Savior, He truly does not want to be just in this way, that He punishes according to merit, but He wants to be and be called so just that He justifies and has mercy on those who recognize their sins. Therefore, for David, who is a sinner, to say, "God, have mercy on me," is just as if he were speaking against the holy Ten Commandments, in which God commands that man not be a sinner, and threatens punishment to sinners. For how do "sinner" and "God" rhyme with each other, who is righteous, true and an adversary and enemy of sinners, who by His nature cannot suffer sins? And yet David, who afterwards says [v. 5], "I know my iniquity," likewise, "My sin is ever before me,"-this David, I say, calls upon GOD, saying, "Be merciful to me." That is, in truth, to connect two incompatible things (incompatibilia), as they say, with each other. So David shows immediately in the beginning the art and wisdom which is higher than the wisdom of the holy ten commandments, and a truly heavenly wisdom which neither the law teaches, nor reason can conceive or understand without the Holy Spirit.

For nature in general thinks so and speaks so among itself: I dare not raise my eyes to heaven, but am terrified by the sight of God. For I know both that I am a sinner and that God hates sins; can I therefore pray? Here indeed begins a very difficult struggle. For either the heart, which is frightened because of the consciousness of sin, thinks that prayer must be postponed until (that I say) it finds some worthiness in itself, or it looks around for human advice and sophistical consolations, so that man thinks beforehand that he wants to do enough, so that with some confidence in his own worthiness he may be able to pray.

and say, "God, have mercy on me." This is constantly the opinion of our nature, but it is exceedingly harmful. For hearts base themselves on the confidence of their own righteousness, and hold that GOD can be propitiated by our works. This is a blasphemous presumption on one's own merits against the merit of Christ; then it follows, because we are born in sins, that we will never pray unless we want to pray until we feel that we are clean from all sins.

Therefore, one must shake off this blasphemous thought, and in the sins themselves, or to express it more significantly, in the midst of the sea of sins, make use of this means, which David uses here, so that prayer will not be postponed. For what is the use of the word "be merciful" if those who pray are pure and have no need of mercy? But, as I have said, this is a very hard struggle, that in the midst of feeling one's sins, one may encourage the heart to cry out to GOD, "Be merciful to me." Sometimes I, who teach this and command others, have learned from my own example that praying is almost the most difficult work of all. Therefore, I do not pretend to be a master in this work, but I confess that I have often, in the greatest dangers, only coldly uttered these words: "God, have mercy on me," because I took offense at my unworthiness. And yet, the Holy Spirit, who reproached me, finally prevailed: However you may be, you must surely pray. For God wants to be asked and heard, not for the sake of your worthiness, but for the sake of His mercy.

Therefore, in order for this to be properly understood, that God hates sinners and loves the righteous, a distinction must be made between a sinner who feels his sins and a sinner who does not feel his sins. GOD does not want the prayer of a sinner who does not feel his sins, because he does not understand nor want what he prays. Thus, a monk who lives in his superstition often chants and murmurs these words, "GOtt, have mercy on me," but because he has confidence in his

If he lives his own righteousness and does not feel the impurity of his heart, he only says the syllables; he does not understand or desire the matter itself. Moreover, he adds such things that are contrary to his prayer. He asks to be forgiven, he asks for mercy, and in the meantime he himself seeks atonement for sin and satisfaction for it, sometimes in this way, sometimes in that way. Doesn't this really mean publicly mocking God? It is just as if a beggar made a great clamor and asked for alms with impetuous words, and if someone offered him alms, he would boast of his wealth, that is, his beggary, and clearly show that he does not need alms.

Thus the enemies of the Gospel count the words, but not only do they not understand the matter, but in fact they do the opposite, in that they perform various religious services and seek the forgiveness of sins through their ungodly masses, pilgrimages, invocation of the saints 2c. Such sinners, who are sinners and yet do not feel that they are sinners, but pass through with an insolent forehead, justify themselves, pursue the word of God 2c., - Such, I say, are to be kept far from all mercy, and are to be presented with sayings of wrath in which God threatens not mercy but eternal punishment, as is the saying in the first commandment: "I am a zealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation." Examples of wrath must also be held up to them, such as the fall of Sodom, the coming of the flood upon all flesh, the scattering of the holy people, and other terrifying images of God's judgment and wrath that are found in Scripture, so that sinners who are unreasonable and impenitent may come to self-knowledge and earnestly begin to implore God for His mercy. For these are the ones of whom it is said: God hates sinners, God does not hear sinners 2c.

The other sinners are those who feel their sins and the wrath of God and are afraid of God's face. These seize the threats held forth in the word of God and apply them to themselves, and through the terrifying examples of the divine

When they are struck in the heart with the hammer of God's wrath, they fear the same punishments for themselves because of their sins. When the heart in this terror is as it were crushed with the hammer of the law and of the judgment of God in such a way, then the right place, time and opportunity is to seize this divine wisdom, that the heart may align itself and certainly hold that God, when He is angry with sinners, is angry only with those who are hard and without understanding; but of those who feel the burden of their sins, let the word be said [Ps. 147, 11.]: "The LORD is pleased with those who fear Him." For then enough is directed by the law, and those thunderbolts of the angry God must cease, and the light of mercy shine, which is presented to us in the word of God, that the LORD is pleased with those who fear Him, that God does not despise a troubled and bruised heart [Ps. 51:19], that His ears should be open [Ps. 10:17], and His eyes should be upon the poor, that He should lift him up out of the mire [Ps. 113:7], that He should take care of the smoldering wick, and make whole the bruised reed 2c. [Isa. 42:3.] For these are the exceedingly tender little worm (as Jerome's translation of 2 Sam. 23:8 [Vulg.] says of David, though it is not in the Hebrew) and the wavering little flower, which is moved and trembles at a slight breeze of the divine threat, while those others, the unintelligent sinners, in the greatest storms stand like iron mountains unmoved at every preaching of repentance. Therefore, in this terror of consciences, one must work toward this one thing alone, that the hearts thus frightened do not judge according to their nature and feeling, because then they would fall into despair, but just as there are different remedies for the diseases that are different according to their nature, so these frightened ones must be raised up with the words of grace, just as those hard people must be crushed with the iron scepter.

The pope with his teachers cannot advise anything salutary in such distresses of the conscience, as I have experienced in my own example. For all judge according to nature, which says: I am a sinner, but God is righteous, because-

Here, the same punishment awaits me as the other sinners. Here nature resists and cannot see the rays of divine mercy in the mists of divine wrath. But here our right theology comes and teaches that then, when the hearts are so frightened, the one part of the theology is directed, which makes use of the law and the threats of the law, in order that the sinner may at first recognize himself, and take off the security in which we all live by nature, before this wrath is revealed. But we must not stop there, but go on to know the other part of theology, in which the whole knowledge of theology is fulfilled, that God gives grace to the humble Peter 5:5]. [This true theology teaches that those threats and terrifying examples refer to the hardened and secure sinners; to them God is a zealous God and a consuming fire; but that those bruised and terrified are the people of grace, whose wounds the good shepherd wants to bind up and heal, who laid down his life for the sheep. Therefore, such people should not give room to the thoughts of their heart that advise them that one should not pray for the sake of sins, that there is no mercy to hope for, but one should cry out with David from a confident heart: "God, be merciful to me," because God is pleased with such people.

This theology of this psalm is unknown to the schools of the papists. For behold here David, who breaks into these words with his mouth wide open: "God, be merciful to me," and thus connects things that are by their nature quite unequal, God and the sinner, the righteous and the unrighteous. But the immense mountain of divine wrath that so separates GOD and David, he transcends in faith in mercy, and unites himself with GOD. Now this is what our theology adds to the law. For to call God by name and to say, "Be merciful," is not difficult; but to add the little word "me" is indeed what is diligently inculcated in the Gospel. And yet we experience how difficult it is for us to do this. For this "me" hinders almost all of our prayers, while there it is

against which should be some cause and the highest occasion for prayer.

Therefore we must first of all learn the example, that we look right at the pronoun "me", and think that it denotes a sinner, as he afterwards clearly interprets it, when he says [v. 7]: "I am conceived in sins." For there he confesses that this "me" is an exceedingly great sinner. Therefore we too should learn this, so that those thoughts which come in heaps and want to hinder us from prayer, may incite us more to cry out, as we read of the blind man in the Gospel [Marc. 10, 46.], who, being threatened to be silent, cried out much more. For we experience in ourselves, that I say so, that great heap of thoughts which reproaches us: Why do you want to pray? Do you not know who you are and who God is? This crowd of thoughts is very burdensome to the spirit, and hinders very many; but one must despise them, and pray for the very reason that seems to hold us back from praying, so that we may, as it were, force our way through that crowd to Christ and ask him for mercy. Those who do this pray rightly, but it really requires a great spiritual struggle. For I have learned from my own experience that these thoughts have very often caused me to lose my prayer. Nevertheless, by the grace of God, I have come to the realization that I did not give way to the devil who confronted me with his arrows, but snatched them from him by the power of the Spirit, and turned my weapons against the enemy himself, saying: "You deter me from prayer for this reason, because I am a sinner. But I see that for this one cause I must pray first of all, because I am a very great sinner and in need of mercy.

The same must be done even in the heat of temptations, when hearts are challenged either with thoughts of unchastity or vengeance. Under such circumstances, when someone exhorts to prayer, the heart immediately turns away its impurity, as if there could be no place for prayer with these impure thoughts. On the other hand, you argue here that it is by no means necessary to wait for the end of the temptation until the spirits are satisfied.

You should not think that the thoughts of unchastity or some other vice have completely disappeared from your heart. But just when you feel that the temptation is most intense and you are least ready to pray, go to a place where you are alone and pray the Lord's Prayer or anything you can say against the devil and his temptation, and you will feel that the temptation will subside and Satan will flee.

Now if someone thinks that one must postpone prayer until the heart is cleansed of impure thoughts, he is doing nothing other than helping the devil, who is already all too powerful, with his wisdom and strength. But this is a pagan and sophistical way of worshipping God (religio), yes, a doctrine of the devil, against which the example and teaching of this Psalm must be held, in which we see that David, in the face of all his impurity and in his extraordinary sin of the flesh, does not flee from God, as Peter foolishly said in the ships [Luc. 5, 8.], "O Lord, go out from me, I am a sinful man," but, trusting in mercy, breaks forth into prayer, saying, "O Lord, though I be a sinner as I am, yet be merciful to me! For since our hearts feel sin in truth, we must therefore all the more come before God with prayer. Before we should have fled, before we should have feared God, when we were in danger of falling into sin; after the fall, we must hope for forgiveness and ask for it, but not remain with thoughts of anger and fear. Now the devil deals with reversing this order, so that when committing sins we are safe and without fear of God, and after committing them we remain in fear, without hope and trust in mercy.

But look at David. As I have said, he clearly takes refuge in mercy and says: "God, be merciful to me," as if he wanted to say: I know that I am evil and a sinner, but that you are just. That I now get up again and dare to pray, I do this entirely in confidence in your word and your promises, because I know.

that you are not a God of the Turks (Mahometistarum) or of the monks, but the God of our fathers, who promised that you would save sinners; not sinners as such, but sorrowful (sensitivos) sinners who recognize their sins and feel that they are sinners 2c. Therefore, we too should dare to say: "God, have mercy on me", I am a sinner, challenged by my flesh and blood, by anger and hatred, but my confidence is in your mercy and goodness, which you have promised to those who thirst for righteousness 2c.

This cannot be said in words, but we must take into account our own experience, which teaches us how much effort it takes to get over this mountain (that I say so) of our own unworthiness and sins, which is between God and us when we want to pray. Although it is here that the weakness of faith is most felt, we must also take this comfort that we are not alone when we say, "God, have mercy on me," but that the Holy Spirit speaks and prays the same thing with us in our hearts, with inexpressible groaning. Now, just as we neither see nor fully understand this groaning, so God sees it most clearly and understands it completely, since He is also a Spirit. Therefore, trusting in this representative [Rom. 8, 26.], we must resist the devil even in the midst of the waves of strife or temptations and say: If I am a sinner, what is the matter? GOD is merciful. If I am unskilled in praying because of my sins, well, I will not become more skilled. For, let it be lamented to God, I am more than skilled at praying, for I am an exceedingly great sinner.

This is the teaching of this passage, that sensitive sinners (sensitivi peccatores, that I call them so for the sake of teaching) should be confident and have a good confidence, and that the righteous GOD and the sinful man must be united with each other, so that we may not be so afraid of GOD in sins that we could not also sing with David: "Be merciful." But we should not let the pronoun "me" or the noun "GOD" hinder us from

In the middle of the psalm, the verb "be merciful" should be placed, through which God and sinful man are reconciled. If this does not happen, we will not only never be able to sing this psalm properly, but also never be able to pray the Lord's Prayer properly, because this will not happen in this life, that we are at the same time clean from all sins. For even if there are no actual sins (actualia, as they are called), which is very rare, there will still be original sin. But since we are always in sins, we must also always pray, as indeed the hearts of Christians pray at every moment, since they see their unworthiness every moment and desire that it be forgiven them. These constant sighs of a Christian heart are disturbed and covered by thoughts, sometimes also by business, so that we do not always see them. This, therefore, is in truth a theological virtue, that we cover sin in this way by prayer, and when we feel our weakness, take refuge in this chant: "GOD, have mercy on me."

But after we have said how the righteous God and the sinful man must be united with each other, it must also be remembered that we must consider the word "be merciful" correctly. For if we consider this carefully, it follows with necessity that we believe that our whole life is decided and situated in the bosom of God's mercy. For since we all belong to "Me," that is, since we are sinners, it follows obviously and with necessary consequence that everything we are and live comes from pure grace, not from our righteousness or merit. How then, you will say, must not the holy ten commandments be kept? But if they are kept, is not that righteousness? I answer: Let us fulfill and keep the ten commandments, but with a great (larga), that is, truly evangelical dispensation or discernment, because we have received only the firstfruits of the Spirit, and the groaning of the Spirit remains in the heart, likewise our flesh with its lusts and desires, that is, the whole tree with its fruits also remains. This is the reason why the

ten commandments can never be completely fulfilled; otherwise, if the ten commandments could be fulfilled without fail, what need would there be of the righteousness for which David asks by the word "be gracious," that is, what need would there be of imputation? Now, however, since even in the saints the remnants of sin still remain and have not yet been completely killed, both things happen, that through the spirit that exists in us we resist sin and obey the ten commandments, and yet, driven to sin by the flesh and the devil, hope for the forgiveness of sins.

Thus under the law it was an obedience to sacrifice, and yet the prophet says afterward [v. 18.], "Sacrifices and burnt offerings are not pleasing to thee." For they were sacrifices in such a way that nevertheless mercy would not be taken away. In the same way we do the law through the Holy Spirit, and yet the word remains, "Be merciful," that is, we remain sinners and need forgiveness of sins by grace through the merit of Christ. So our whole life until death is mercy, and yet Christians perform obedience to the law, but imperfectly, because of the sin that dwells within us. Therefore, we too must learn this, that we may well extend the word "be merciful", not only to the sins of the deed, but to all the benefits of God: namely, that we are righteous through the merit of others, that we have God as our Father, that God the Father loves sinners who feel their sins (sensitivos), in short, that our whole life is mercy, because our whole life is sin, and cannot be opposed to the judgment or wrath of God.

Therefore, David does not merely say, "God, be merciful to me," but adds, "According to your great mercy," and is silent about all merit and all righteousness of works. He does not say, as he did in the Gospel sLuc. 18, 12], "I fast twice a week"; he does not say, "Be merciful to me according to the merit which I have in law or in equity (condigni aut congrui). For what has this to do with mercy? For the monks, but not for David, it is fitting that

they boast of their merit and other things, as the brother of a certain king is said to have said to God in the hour of his death: Keep to me what you have promised me, for I have done against you what you have commanded. I do not want that to be my word in my last hour. For one must speak quite differently [Ps. 143, 2.], "O Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant." Likewise [Ps. 51:3], "Blot out my sin." For what merit can we boast of, that we should have acquired before God this, as it seems, very small boon, that He has preserved healthy eyes for us? David is silent about his righteousness and merit, and wants God to act according to His great mercy. In this way, he not only disassociates himself from his own righteousness, but also from the wrath of God, and keeps no other image before his eyes than the merciful, joyful and laughing God. For he firmly believes that God has a great mercy, for whose sake he neither wants nor thinks of anything else but forgiveness and benevolence.

This image of the gracious and merciful GOD is a vivifying image with which the prophet covers the pronoun "me" and throws the anger into the corner, saying: GOD is gracious. This is not the theology of reason, which persuades in sins to despair, but David feels his sin and the wrath of GOD, and yet says, "GOD, be gracious to me." Reason does not know this doctrine, but the holy Scriptures teach it, as you see in the first verse of this Psalm. For each and every word is set forth loud and blameless, but they are words of the Spirit that have life, from which spiritual people learn to make a distinction between sinner and sinner, between GOtt and GOtt, and also learn to reconcile the wrath of GOtt or the angry GOtt with sinful man. But, you will say, this is not so for the sake of it, that I, instructed by your word in such a way, learn to think these things with myself in this way. Answer: You must firmly believe that as you believe, so shall it be done unto you, for this faith is not taken from your imaginings, but is in the

God's word. Therefore, if you can grasp this and hold on to it, that God is pleased with those who fear Him, then in truth it will happen to you. If you do not grasp it, then you are not under the pleasure, but under the wrath of GOD, as Christ says [Matth. 8, 13.], "As you believe, so shall it be done to you." But the thought of the wrath of God is in itself false, because God promises mercy, and yet such a false thought becomes true for its own sake, because you believe it to be true. On the other hand, the other thought, that God is favorable to sinners who feel their sins, is and remains absolutely true. Therefore, it is nothing for you to think that it will not be so for the sake of believing so. Rather, hold that the thing that is certain and true in itself becomes even more certain and true when you believe this way, just as when you believe that God is angry, you certainly have Him as an angry God and as an enemy. But this happens through your devilish, idolatrous and perverse thoughts, because God is served in this way when one fears Him and takes hold of Christ, in whom He offers us His mercy.

This is the right theology of the true God and the true worship. The false theology is that God is angry with those who recognize their sins. For such a God is neither in heaven nor anywhere, but this is an idol of a wrong heart. For the true GOD says [Ezek. 33, 11.], "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his nature and live." This is also confirmed here by the example and prayer of David, and in the beginning we reminded that one should not merely look at the example of David here, but should make the Psalm a general doctrine, which refers par excellence to all men without all exception, as the epistle to the Romans [Cap. 3, 4.] cites the saying [Ps. 116, 11.] quite generally: "All men are liars," likewise [Rom. 11, 32.], "God hath concluded all under sin, that he might have mercy on all." In this way we have said of David that he was not alone in his sin,

but the death and life of the whole human race. Therefore, God is such a God to all people as He was to David, that is, who forgives sin and is merciful to all who ask for mercy and recognize their sins.

Here it belongs that he wanted to use this repetition or rather extension, that he adds: "And blot out my sins according to your great mercy." Previously he asked that God, according to His goodness, would turn away his eyes from his sins; in this offense he deals with the same matter, and with greater earnestness and spirit. For he grasps the GOD who made the promise, and turns to mercy in such a way that he looks at it with all his heart, which he would not have been able to do if he had not, by the help of the Spirit, grasped GOD as the one who made the promise, and knew that with GOD there was still a hope of forgiveness of sins left for sinners, as he says in another Psalm [Ps. 130:4]: "With thee is forgiveness, that one may fear thee." He does not look for pardons, he does not go into a corner to prepare himself for grace in it, but seeks straightly for the face of God and for His mercy, which is not known to him from his own heart, not by the inspiration of his right reason (for reason flees from God in sins, and the conscience cannot rise to the light that it believes there is still mercy, grace and favor with God for sinners), but mercy is known to him from the promises that he sees interspersed everywhere, also in the law and the holy ten commandments. For even though God threatens the sinners there, He still keeps the name of a merciful God [Ex. 34:6]. The same testifies the promises that happened to Adam, Abraham 2c.

We must do the same in our temptations, so that as often as our conscience bites and torments us because of our sins, we simply turn our minds away from sin and go to the bosom of God, which is called grace and mercy, and not at all to the bosom of God.

doubt that he will show grace and mercy to wretched and afflicted sinners, as he will execute his wrath and judgment against hardened sinners. This is the true theology, which is also clearly indicated by this verse of the Psalm, since it says: "Blot out my sins according to thy great mercy."

The word 21. is used of a special and constant amount, as we also say in German: "groß Geld" for a lot of money and money in large numbers (numerosa). Then the word XXX is also known. Paul often translates it by Wohlthat or εὐε[^]*- γεία, as I Tim. 6, 2. where he speaks to the servants that they should hold their masters in honor. He adds the cause, "because they," he says, "are partakers of the benefit of the gospel." At times he translates it by love. The Greek interpreter has expressed it by mercy (misericordia), as in the passage in Hosea [Hos. 6, 6. Vulg.], "I delight in mercy, and not in sacrifice," that is, that you love one another, that you do good to others, and so he translates here: "GOD, be merciful to me according to your great mercy" (magnam misericordiam). The other word XXX means to put on a mild sense, not to want to look at the sin of another, but to forgive, to be lenient 2c., as in this passage [Ex. 33, 19.]: "Weß ich mich erbarme, deß erbarme ich mich," that is, I will pardon, forgive the sin. Hence comes the noun XXXX, which our Latin interpreter translates by *miseratio*. This belongs to the Hebrew grammar, in which those who do not understand it well must be instructed.

But now see how beautifully David connects these two pieces, first, that God is merciful, that is, that He benefits us freely without our merit, and second, that He gives us the forgiveness of sins, which we accept in faith through the Holy Spirit, and gives the promises; for if God does not forgive us sin in vain, then no satisfaction, no remedy remains for us. Not by our fasting, not by other works, not by the angels, nor by any other creature can salvation come to us, but the only salvation is,

that we take refuge in the mercy of God, that we seek God's mercy and forgiveness, that He will not look at our sins and transgressions, but will close our eyes and deal with us according to His goodness and mercy. For if God does not do this, we are not worthy that He should let us live even one hour, give us only one morsel of bread 2c.

But also here we learn that it is a very great art and extremely difficult to connect these two pieces with each other in such a way, and to fix the eyes only on the goodness and mercy. For these words do not grow in our house, but are brought down from heaven by the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, these thorns grow in our hearts: I am a sinner, God is just and is angry with me who am a sinner. These thorns cannot be plucked out by the conscience, it cannot place the sinner before the gracious and forgiving God; this is the gift of the Holy Spirit, but it is not in our free will or in our powers. For when man is without the Holy Spirit, hearts either harden in their sins, or they despair; but both are contrary to the will of GOD. Therefore, David, through the Holy Spirit, navigates through the midst of this diabolical Scylla and Charybdis, and casts himself securely on the exceedingly great and infinite mercy of God, saying: "Much and great is your mercy, O Lord, but I am a sinner, since I have lived evil, live evil, and will live evil as long as I live. Therefore, if I want to come before you, it is necessary that I bring other thoughts than my heart gives me. Therefore I confess my sin before you, for it is much (as he says in the 32nd Psalm, v. 5). But I confess my sin in such a way that I also confess your goodness, and your mercy, which is immeasurably greater than my sin, and likewise your righteousness, by which you justify sinners, which is infinitely greater than that I should despair, as he says [Vulg.], "According to the multitude of your mercies." But because he says that it is a great multitude of mercies, he flatly denies that both he and other people have any

Holiness, and does not want to know anything about it. For how could the multitude of mercies and human holiness coexist? Therefore, if there is so much mercy, there is no holiness among us, and it is in truth a fictitious expression when one calls a man holy, just as it is a fictitious expression when one says that God fell into sin, because this cannot take place in reality.

Therefore, we must abandon the all-too-common 1) and by long use ingrained error of calling Jerome holy and Paul 2c. holy after the manner of the monks, because they are sinners in themselves, and God alone is holy, as the church sings. But those whom we call holy are made holy by an alien holiness, through Christ; that is a holiness which comes from the mercy freely given by grace. In this holiness the whole congregation of believers stands, and there is no difference. For as Peter is holy, so am I holy. But as I am holy, so also the thief at the right hand of Christ is holy, and it does not prevent Peter and Paul from having accomplished greater things than I or you. For on both sides we are sinners by nature, and in need of kindness and mercy. Although the apostles had fewer outward sins, yet they often felt in their hearts presumption, often weariness, often thoughts of despair, often denial of God, and similar infirmities of human weakness, to such an extent that nothing holy, nothing good, can be seen in man, as the Psalm says [Ps. 53:3, 4]: "God looks down from heaven upon the children of men, and there is none that doeth good, not even one." If there are no good people among the children of men, where could they be elsewhere?

Therefore we will be silent about holiness and saints, but we know that those are made holy who turn sinners of no understanding into sinners of understanding, who are not presumptuous because of their righteousness, since it is nothing, but begin an enlightened life.

1) The Erlanger has retained minus in the text, although this is marked as a printing error in the 1539 edition, instead of: niinis.

We must have a sincere heart, so that they recognize themselves and God, that everything that is ours is evil in the sight of God, and that we are forgiven by grace in vain through the bestowal of mercy. It is necessary for us and all the saints to take refuge in this bosom, or we will inevitably be condemned. But for this reason God sent His Son to reveal this mercy to the world and to make known this doctrine, of which human hearts and reason know nothing; and David presents it to us here, confessing his sins, yet confessing that mercy is greater.

Therefore, all people should sing this verse with David and recognize that they are sinners, but that God is just, that is, merciful. This confession is a sacrifice pleasing and pleasant to God, to which David invites us. For he wants this to be a common teaching for the whole world, so that when the devil or our conscience accuses us of our sins, we may freely confess our sin, that we are in many and great sins, but do not despair because of it. For even though our sins are many and great, we are taught here that the mercy of God is also many and great. In this way all the saints have defended themselves against Satan, so that even though they were sinners, they were sanctified by this knowledge, as Isaiah says [Cap. 53, 11]: The knowledge of Christ will make many righteous.

Once we have heard this, we think it is easy and will soon be learned. But truly this takes effort, this is work, that we only hold on to this to some extent in the challenge. For this is not a quarrel about trivial things (*de lana caprina*), but it is about the danger of eternal death, and we fight because of our souls' blessedness. Furthermore, we learn that not only our conscience cries out against us, but also the devil gives us thoughts of death because of the sins of which we are aware. Therefore, to say that one is a sinner, and yet not despair, is entirely a divine virtue. But we do not attain to it in this way, if we, like our adversaries, belittle sin, but we must do this, that we, like the

sin by its nature is exceedingly great and grievous, so also believe that grace or mercy is immeasurable and inexhaustible, as David boasts in a loud voice (*pleno ore*): "Blot out my sin according to thy great mercy."

And the word "erase", which the prophet uses here, and Paul Col. 2, 14. also serves this purpose: "He has erased the handwriting that was against us." Likewise Peter Apost. 3:19: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." For the word "blot out" shows that the sins are written in our conscience with the pen of the law, and the prophet wishes, as the writing on a tablet is wiped out, so the memory of the sin would also be wiped out in his heart and in the eyes of God, but in such a way that the grace or gratitude is not lost, because the guilt is forgiven in such a way that we should not forget the grace, as Peter [2 Petr. 1:9] of those who forget the forgiveness of old sins and heap up new sins through unbelief and ingratitude, as we see today that the world is full of contempt for the Gospel and all kinds of licentiousness. In such people, sin is not blotted out but buried deeper. Therefore, David summarizes both here, that the sin is blotted out, and the Holy Spirit is given, through which he can resist the sin. But since he asks only for the blotting out, it is evident how we are justified, namely, only through the imputation of righteousness, since sins are blotted out by grace, and we are accepted by grace for Christ's sake. But compare with this the dreams of the sophists and school theologians, and you will see how inconsistently they taught about the forgiveness of sins and about righteousness.

V. 4. Wash me well from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

So far he has asked for mercy and forgiveness of sins or forbearance, that God would be favorable to him and to all of us, forgiving and eradicating sin according to His mercy. For this is the first part or the first stage after the knowledge of sin, that one may ask for mercy and forgiveness.

that one may have a favorable God who does us good, so that we may be in the bosom of God's mercy and firmly trust in the certain promises given to us by the grace of God. As we have these promises in baptism, so they [the Old Testament believers] had them in the promised Christ. But in this verse, where he asks that he may be washed from his sins, he holds out to us a different distinction of sin than we indicated above. For above we divided sin into sensible sin (*sensibile*, that I say so) and non-sensible, just as we made two kinds of sinners, sensible sinners and senseless sinners (*sensatos et insensatos*), or true sinners and saints or hypocrites, who obdurately and surely do not feel their sin. Here he shows that perceived sin is also twofold, or treated in twofold ways. For there is a sin that is forgiven by grace, and there is a sin that is still left in the flesh. The sin that is forgiven by grace is that God will not forsake us for Christ's sake, however great sinners we are, but that He will mercifully forbear with us who are lost and corrupted by sin.

We are not satisfied with the fact that we have been forgiven this sin by grace, because we fall into sins again out of weakness. Therefore, we would like not only to be forgiven of sin, but also to have it completely eradicated. For sin, as Augustine says, remains in fact (*actu*), but in reckoning (*reatu*) it is gone, that is, the thing itself, which in truth is sin and has been forgiven and tolerated by God, still remains in the flesh and is not yet completely dead. Admittedly, through Christ, as it says in the first book of Moses [Cap. 3, 15], the serpent's head has been crushed, but with its tongue it still flickers and with its tail it threatens to bite the heel. For since the grace and mercy of God reigns over us, sin cannot condemn us, it cannot make God angry against us, and yet the remnants of sin remain in the justified, as, evil, evil, evil, evil, evil.

Lust and other vices, which the prophet sees, as it were, as remaining yeasts or planting places (*seminaria*) in himself. And just as he asked above for forgiveness of sins in general, so he asks here for the cleansing of these remnants or their eradication.

This, therefore, is the second part of this petition, which, as I have said, indicates to us the second distinction of sin, that God wants to eradicate sins as far as the remission of guilt and the power of sin itself are concerned, not as far as the cause or nature (*naturam*) of sin is concerned. For the power of sin is that it accuses, condemns, bites, woes, leaves no peace to the heart, reproaches that God is angry, threatens hell 2c. This power of sin is taken away in vain by the mercy of grace, and yet true remnants of this poison still remain. Therefore it is both true that no Christian has sin, and that every Christian has sin. From this arises the distinction that among Christians there is a twofold sin, the forgiven sin and the remaining sin, which must be eradicated and washed away. The forgiven sin is the one that is trampled underfoot by trusting in mercy, so that it cannot condemn or accuse; and yet, because of our flesh, it still sprouts again and strives (*militates*) in our flesh to bring forth the same fruits as before, so that we may be secure, ungrateful, without knowledge of God, as we were before. These are efforts of the remnants of sin in us, which the saints also feel, but through the Holy Spirit they do not let them have their way.

Therefore, a Christian, after he is justified by faith or has received the forgiveness of sins, must not be so sure as if he were completely clean from all sins, but only then is he subject to the constant struggle with the remnants of sin, from which the prophet here desires to be washed. He is indeed righteous and holy through external or extrinsic holiness (to use this expression *extrinseca sanctitas* for the sake of teaching), that is, he is righteous through the mercy and grace of God. This mercy and grace is not something in the human being, it is not a ver-

It is not a habitus or a quality in the heart, but it is a benefit of God given to us through our own knowledge of the gospel, that we know or believe that our sin is forgiven us through Christ's grace and merit, and that for Christ's sake we hope for mercy and many great mercies, as the prophet says here. But is not this righteousness an alien righteousness? for it consists wholly in the forbearance of another, and is a fair gift of God, who has mercy and is gracious for Christ's sake.

This is made clear by a simile. If someone at the court of a prince deserves the death penalty, and now the prince releases this person by grace, will you not say that his guilt is forgiven, not by his own merit, but free of charge by grace through the benevolence of the gracious prince? For he deserves nothing but the death penalty. But for such a man it is not enough that he be forgiven for the wrong he has done, but his bonds must also be loosed, he must be clothed, and he must be given something to live on. The same is the case with us in the transaction of justification. For after we are free from guilt through mercy, then we also need the gift of the Holy Spirit, who fills us with what is left of sin, or at least helps us, so that we do not succumb to sins and the lusts of the flesh, as Paul says [Rom. 8:13], killing business through the spirit of the flesh. But now it is so with us that most live in such security as if we were entirely spirit and nothing at all remained of the flesh. Therefore we must learn that flesh still remains, and that the office of the spirit is this, that it fights against the flesh, so that the flesh does not carry out what it desires.

Therefore, a Christian is not righteous in himself (formaliter), he is not righteous according to his essence or nature (secundum substantiam aut qualitatem, these expressions I use for the sake of teaching), but he is righteous according to the category of the relation to something,

which is beyond us (secundum praedicamentum ad aliquid), namely, only with regard to divine grace and the forgiveness of sins by grace freely, which is granted to those who recognize their sin and believe that God is gracious to them and forgives for the sake of Christ, who was given for our sins and believed by us. After we have attained this righteousness through faith, then this bath or washing is necessary, of which this Psalm says. For although sin no longer condemns us, it nevertheless remains, torments us, and hinders us so much that we are not so accepted by love toward God that we do not believe with all our heart as we would like to in spirit, or God demands that we not be so chaste, patient, kind, 2c. but as it were all members suffer from their vices, contrary to the law of God. If we do not oppose and fight against this with great effort, then there is danger that these vices will become great and draw us back into the old godless nature, as is taught by very many examples of our people, who now, after they have heard the gospel, are far worse than before, as is also taught by the examples of the rotten ones. For they are as sure as if their reason could not deceive them, and as if they had no more flesh. The devilish thoughts, which they bring to the word of God, they admire and spread out as if they were revelations from heaven (oracula). When this happens, there is no help for it.

Against this certainty it is useful to consider this prayer of David, in which he, after asking for forgiveness of sins, as far as the guilt is concerned, and rejoices in the mercy of God, also asks for what is left, that he may be washed from his iniquity, that the Holy Spirit may be given to him, the power and the gift 1) that lives inwardly in the heart, and fills up what is left of sin, what has begun to be buried through baptism, but is not yet completely buried. And this is the Christian life, as it is gloriously described in the Epistle to the Colossians, Cap. 3, 2. f., is described,

1) Erlanger: äomini instead of äonuna. The former **reading** is found in the original.

that we should seek the things that are above, since we have died to the world and our life is hidden in Christ; and 2 Cor. 7:1, that we should purify ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. For he indicates that in him and in all Christians such defilements of the spirit remain, that is, evil opinions of God; and defilements of the flesh, that is, vicious desires, and this must be our effort and our task, that we sweep them out with the help of the Spirit. But those who think that they are completely holy and without infirmity, defile themselves in the spirit and lose faith, and form opinions that are very similar to faith, but inspired by the devil, through which they are led away from the Word into godlessness.

One can soon say, "I believe in Christ," but it takes a great deal of effort for this belief to be and remain firm and certain in the heart, because there is defilement of the spirit, and neither our reason nor the devil rests, which are intent with united forces that we should leave the word alone and rule ourselves by our own opinions. Hence arise the mobs and heresies that hate us with the most bitter hatred; and yet they think that this hatred of theirs is not sin, but spend it for zeal. Therefore they do not sweep out this sin, do not wash it away, but increase it daily. But we are to take care that we are washed daily, that we may be purified from day to day, that the new man may arise, and the old man may perish daily, not only unto death, but also unto sanctification. To this school of training (palaestra, that I say so) of Christians also belongs that God not only allows the Church to be afflicted with various physical misfortunes, but also allows heresies and pieties to arise, so that she may be trained to hold fast the Word and the faith and to sweep out the remnants of sin. For this reason the Holy Spirit is given to believers, so that he may fight with the vain thoughts (larvis) of our wisdom in our hearts, which rise up against the righteousness of God, and also so that he may stimulate us to pray, to teach us the truth, and to give us the strength we need.

of all kinds of kind service to everyone, but especially to the brethren, and that thus the soul and the body may be exercised, and we may become more holy day by day.

This is therefore a clear confession that Christians are sinners. For where washing is required, it is indicated that there is defilement and impurity. But because our sophists know only philosophical righteousness or a state of mind, they cannot reconcile these contending things. They suppose that righteousness is a quality in the heart; if it is there, they think, the whole man is holy in spirit and body. Therefore, when they hear that Paul is a chosen instrument, and yet a sinner, because of the remnants of sin that cling to nature, they think they are hearing about a fictitious miraculous thing (chimaeram) that is nowhere in all of nature. Therefore they condemn us as heretics and threaten us with death by fire.

But they may answer us to this so noble and universally known psalm: what then is the cause that David, after goodness and mercy have befallen him, that is, after he has been made righteous, also still asks to be cleansed? For though David has forgiveness of sins and stands in grace, though no sin accuses him nor condemns him, yet he is still unclean and still has unclean sin, which lacks nothing that it should not truly be sin, but that it cannot condemn him. So the righteous and justified David still has sin and is still partly unrighteous. Therefore he asks for the greatest gift of the Holy Spirit to sweep out this filth, and this gift proves sufficiently that this washing is not a game or a joke. For we must also be careful not to diminish the remnants of sin. For if we diminish them, we also diminish the one who cleanses and the gift of cleansing, the Holy Spirit. And the prophet expressly calls this remnant sin and iniquity, though it is not the sin it was before, because its head is trodden down by the forgiveness of sins.

Therefore, the prophet does not simply say: Wash me, but: "Wash me well" (amplius) or much, today, tomorrow and so on and on throughout life, from the defilements of body and spirit, so that I may become stronger and more confident against the terrors of the law from day to day, until I become a master over the law and sin through the joyful confidence (plerophoria) in your mercy 2c. This is the teaching of this psalm and a constant school for us, in which we can never become perfect masters, neither we, nor the apostles, nor the prophets. For we all remain disciples here, and we all ask to be washed even more as long as we live.

These are the two things that are necessary for us to be justified. The first is the grace revealed through Christ, that through Christ we have a reconciled God, that sin can no longer accuse us, but the conscience is brought to -good rest (securitatem) through trust in the mercy of God. The other is that we are given the Holy Spirit with his gifts, who enlightens against the defilements of the spirit and the flesh, so that we are protected from the opinions of the devil, with which he deceives the whole world, so that the right knowledge of God grows daily, as well as other gifts, chastity, obedience, patience, so that our body and lusts are broken, so that we do not obey them. Those who do not have this gift, or do not use it in this way, but fall either into uncleanness of the flesh or of the spirit, so that they approve all doctrines without distinction, are ruled by the flesh, and such people do not know what the bath of the Holy Spirit is, which David asks for here.

V. 5 For I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me.

We have heard two verses of this Psalm in which David asked, first, for mercy and forgiveness of sins, then also for the gift that cleanses and sweeps out the lees or remnants of sin. For these two things are what make a man perfectly righteous and holy in the sight of God, without all preparation and sufficiency.

We do not need the pretended repentance that we have taught among the people until now, and that the papists still teach. For there is only One Cause of Justification, namely the merit of Christ or the mercy of grace in vain, which the hearts, inflamed by the Holy Spirit, take hold of by faith. Now, if anyone wishes, he may regard the acknowledgment of sin as the second cause, or, as scholars speak of it, as the *causa sine qua non*, 1) because it is a cause in such a way that nevertheless the whole thing depends on the mercy of God, or on the promise, namely, that God has promised to have mercy on those who acknowledge their sins and thirst for righteousness. Otherwise, if one wants to speak of the nature of sin, even of the sin that is felt (*sensitivo*, as we called it above), then according to all laws and according to nature nothing else is due to it than punishment and the greatest wrath. But that such people escape punishment and wrath is entirely due to God's mercy, who promised that He would restore those who feel their sins and the horrors of divine judgment by graciously forgiving sin, in vain.

Therefore, there is nothing that could in any way be cited as a merit, because even the acknowledgement of sin is nothing, but only as much as the divine promise accomplishes. For if sin is punished and revealed by the Holy Spirit, as David considered not only adultery but the whole of nature, which is completely corrupted by sin, in his heart: if then nothing could be expected but our satisfaction, David would have been brought low by fear of God's judgment and by despair, as our own experience has often taught us. In the monasteries, repentance was imposed on us and a very precise confession of sins, but this did not put the conscience to rest. One was advised to put on the cap,

1) Luther himself did not use this expression, but 6ÄU8N Secunda. It is an addition of Veit Dietrich, because of which he experienced many hostilities. Dalvinder he complains in a letter to JustuS Menius of 30 October 1538 (Kolde, ^nalvet" l'utüsrrwa, p. 331 f).

but the same anguish of heart continued in the cap that we had suffered before, and it did not help that the cap was thrown off again. But this we learn through God's goodness, that the quickest and surest remedy is to know or believe that God wants to forgive those who are frightened by their sins, and that He commands such people to hope for the forgiveness of sins. David shows by his example that this article (locum) of the promise caused him to ask for mercy and for the gift by which he would be cleansed.

Therefore, the particle "for" that gives the reason (rationalis), which he uses here, is not set in the sense as if the recognition of sin were the first cause that deserved the forgiveness of sins. For sin is sin, and by its nature deserves punishment, whether it be acknowledged or not. But the acknowledgment of sin is a kind of co-requisite (correquisitum), because God wants to forgive those who acknowledge sins; He does not want to forgive those who do not acknowledge them. This promise is the only cause, and the first, middle, and final cause, that is, it is everything in the trade of justification. It is to this promise that David looks, as he says, "For I recognize my iniquity," as if to say: I do not count this a merit, that I know my sin; but because thou hast promised mercy to them that know their sins, therefore I confess before thee that I know my sin 2c. The word "recognize" (nosce) has a much broader meaning in Hebrew than in other languages. For it denotes, to feel and experience something as it is by its nature. Thus the Scripture says of Adam [Gen. 4:1], "He knew his wife," that is, he experienced and felt her. Thus God does not recognize the worthy, that is, He does not care for them, He does not promote them 2c. In this way it says here: "For I recognize my sin", as if he wanted to say: I have come to the point that now is the time to have mercy and to help, for I have become from a sinner without understanding such a sinner who feels (sentiens) his sin, since I now recognize the sin and judgment of GOtt, that is,

feel right. Furthermore, this feeling is natural death itself, unless thoughts of peace are inspired by the Holy Spirit and the knowledge of God's mercy that God does not want to destroy such sinners.

Here such sayings are necessary, as the holy fathers have undoubtedly considered very well, that the Lord says in the fifth book of Moses, although he speaks there of bodily good deeds [5 Mos. 9, "Not for thy righteousness and uprightness of heart shalt thou possess the land of the Gentiles" 2c.; likewise [Isa. 43, 25.]: "I, the Lord, will blot out thy transgression"; likewise [Ezek. 33, 11.]: "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked" 2c. Here we need the examples that God, when the Ninivites repented, that is, when they humbled themselves in recognition of their sin, revokes His judgment and says [Jonah 3:10], "I will not destroy them." Likewise, He forgives Ahab, whom He had threatened with the destruction of his entire house, and says to the prophet [1 Kings 21:29], "Did you not see Ahab bowing down before Me?" From these histories grows that theological knowledge of God, that God is a God of the lowly, the afflicted and the poor, who recognize themselves to be sinners and fear God in such a way that they nevertheless hope more for His mercy. Such sayings and examples were undoubtedly well known to the holy fathers under the Law and held in high esteem.

Our monks (devotarii) had taken a very good simile from Moses, where he commands [Deut. 24, 6.] that one should not take the lowest and the highest millstone for a pledge at the same time, so that the debtor does not get into danger for the sake of his food. This they have taken to mean that God wants nothing but that one should feel anger, but that He wants the feeling of anger to be mixed with the feeling of grace, according to the saying [Ps. 147:11]: "The Lord is pleased with those who fear Him and with those who hope in His goodness." In this way David also asks to be forgiven, "for," he says, "I recognize my iniquity." What is that to me, GOD might say. If you recognize your sin and grieve over it from the heart, you may also forgive the

Have fruit of your works. In this way, the law would answer and let man perish in this feeling of his sin. For a judge is accustomed to act in this way; he connects the punishment with the confession of guilt. But God does not want to be a judge, that is why He abolished the law by preaching the Gospel, in which He testifies that it is a sufficient punishment for Him if the heart is grieved and despairing, which before was secure in its sins. He does this, not because there is any merit in recognizing sin, but because he promised to forgive those who recognize it, and to be angry only with sinners who do not feel their sins, but are either presumptuous of their powers and want to be justified by their own merit, or surely sin according to the lust of their flesh, without fear of God. But these gross sinners are even better than those who cover their sin with a twofold blanket, namely, that they rely on their own powers and reject mercy.

David does it quite differently here. He asks for forgiveness, but for no other reason than because he is a sinner and sees his weakness, like a beggar who turns to a rich man, to whom he thinks that he is generous. If this rich man gives something to the beggar, he does not do it because of any merit (for what does he deserve who complains of his lack?) but he gives because he is generous, moved by his mercy.

"And my sin is always before me," that is, it lies on my neck, presses me, I cannot be completely freed from it. But here beware that you do not understand it as if he were speaking of the sin of the deed, but the prophet has his whole life before his eyes with all his own righteousness, even the most holy, and he feels that he cannot be helped by all this if mercy does not come to it. Thus it is said of Bernard, a man who lived in admirable holiness, that this was almost his last word: "I have lived shamefully. This means in truth: "My sin is before me," that one does not have to confess one or the other misdeed before the other.

but the whole nature and all sin together, with all powers, with all righteousness and wisdom of the flesh: that all this is nothing in the sight of God's judgment, and Bernhard must say with David, and David with all the saints [Ps. 143:2], "O Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant."

Sadoletus takes this from Thatsin, but in no other way could he have more clearly displayed his exceedingly great ignorance in true theology. For these things are not in dainty speech, but in custom and experience, which the glorious examples of David and other saints in the sacred Scriptures indicate, of which Sadoletus understands nothing. But I emphasize this all the more carefully because I have experienced how difficult it is to persuade those who are upset in scholastic theology, and we need this knowledge not only for ourselves, but also when others need to be comforted who feel their sins in the same way. For when sin is thus before our eyes, the heart does not dare to rise up, but sings to itself without ceasing this little song: You are a sinner, therefore God hates you. This conclusion is correct in nature, in civil law and in the judicial system, and in all human affairs. There, of course, this conclusion should remain right, that you say: You are a sinner in this and that sin, therefore the emperor hates you, the judge 2c. But beware of this, as of the poison of the devil and the most pernicious pestilence, lest you transfer this conclusion from the judicial system to the judgment seat of Christ. For there it is not a consequence: You are a sinner, therefore God hates you, but it follows: You are a sinner, therefore have confidence, because God wants such sinners who feel their sins. Otherwise no man could be saved, not the apostles, not the prophets, because God has decided everything under sin, but for the sake of it, so that He might have mercy on all (Rom. 11, 32. Gal. 3, 22.). Therefore, if you realize that you have sin, if you tremble, if you are tormented by the feeling of God's wrath, by the horror of God's judgment and of hell, then be confident, for you are the person with whom God is

to whom God wants to show his mercy and whom he wants to make blessed. For these are his promises, that he is a God of the poor, who does not take pleasure in the death of the sinner. For he is not a God of wrath, but of grace and peace, therefore he wants the sinner to repent and live. These consolations are not trivial words based on the decrees of the fathers or the rules of the order (*ingressura religionis*, as they are called), but they are based on the divine promises and the almighty word of God; therefore, hearts are also uplifted and feel firm and certain consolation.

Thus David states this reason why he desires mercy, and says: "For my sin is always before me," that is, my sin oppresses me, it leaves me no rest, no peace; not by wine, not by bread, not by sleep is this feeling of wrath and death dispelled. In such distress there is no other remedy for me than for the heart to fight against this feeling and say, "God, have mercy on me." For this is your time; it is the time that needs the divine effect and sleeve with which you assist the sinner and comfort him. For what kind of God would he be if he knew nothing but to kill and to terrify? This is what the devil is wont to do, as well as sin and my own conscience. But that he is God means that he is able and does something about these things, namely, that he comforts, directs and brings to life in such distresses, so that he shows that he knows and is able to do more than the devil, the law and I know and can do. Therefore, when the law has frightened and scourged a hard heart until it has made it feel sin, then Christ also shall come according to his promise, and shall again comfort and raise up him who is thus frightened. But we are to accept these consolations in faith and not become faithless against the divine revelation. Now follows:

V. 6. In you alone have I sinned and done evil in your sight, that you may be justified in your words and remain pure when you are judged.

This verse has been treated by many in various ways, and it has always been judged that this little piece in this Psalm is extremely difficult. But because Paul mentions it in his letter to the Romans [Cap. 3, 4], it has been counted among the most difficult passages of the whole Scripture. Although I gladly allow others to hold to their opinion, I have good hope that we will not be lacking in the right and proper sense. But I want to remind the reader first of all that he should keep what we said at the beginning of the psalm, namely that David speaks in the person of all the saints, not only in his person or in the person of the adulterer, although I do not want to deny that it could have happened that this case brought him to the knowledge of himself and of the whole human nature, that he thought so: Behold, I, such a holy king, who have been so zealous to keep the law and worship holy, am so overcome and defeated by the inherent wickedness and sin of the flesh, that I have caused an innocent man to be put to death, and by adultery have snatched away his spouse. Is this not a clear proof that nature is much more seriously infected and corrupted by sin than I could ever have suspected? I, who was chaste yesterday, am an adulterer today; while yesterday I had innocent hands, free from blood, I am now a man burdened with blood guilt. And in this way it is possible that he got this general sense of the whole sin through this case of adultery and the death stroke, and concluded from it that neither the tree nor the fruits of human nature were good, but everything was so disfigured and corrupted by sin that there was nothing healthy left in the whole nature. I wanted to remind the reader of this first, if he desires a healthy view of this passage otherwise.

Secondly, the grammar is also to be explained, which is somewhat dark. For what the Latin interpreter has rendered by a word in the past time should be in the present time: On you alone

I sin, that is, I recognize that I am nothing but a sinner before you; likewise: Before thee I do evil always, that is, my whole life is evil and corrupt because of sin. I can boast no merit or righteousness before thee, but am altogether evil; and before thee this is my name, that I do evil, that I have sinned, that I sin, that I shall sin without ceasing. In this way, the change of the past tense into the present tense takes us away from the actual sin, and we must understand the psalm of sin as a whole. Sadoletus, as an inexperienced theologian who is nevertheless a man of great eloquence, struggles in many ways and twists the meaning so that one cannot even guess what he means. The little word "alone" he interprets in such a way that no one has seen sin except God; but who does not see how inconsistent this conception is!

Therefore, we first want to restore the grammar here, that the preterites are to be translated by the present tense. Then the little word "alone" (*solus*) is to be taken as an adverb, so that the actual and correct and also quite simple sense is this: In you alone, or: only in you do I sin. Before you I am nothing but a sinner; before your judgment I boast of no merit, not of any righteousness, but recognize myself as a sinner, and implore your mercy. Thus, then, this sentence is made a universal saying (universal), which is also found in John in the first chapter [v. 9.], "Christ (qui) enlighteneth all men." For there he says that the whole human nature has become blind through sin. This view of this passage is also confirmed by Paul in the Epistle to the Romans [Cap. 3, 4.], who seems to have deliberately adduced this saying in order to show how it must be understood. For in the same place he also puts this general saying [Ps. 116, 11.]: "All men are liars, that (ut) GOD alone may be true." In the same way the little word "so that" (ut) is to be interpreted here. For this is not his opinion that God's righteousness is increased by our sins, as godless people slandered Paul [Rom. 3, 8],

But he says most simply, "I sin only before you, I do evil only before you, so that it may be true that you alone are righteous and justify sinners, since you alone free them from sin, not imputing it to those who trust in your mercy.

Paul clearly indicates this meaning in what immediately precedes the citation of this passage. Therefore the word "that" (ut) does not indicate our work, that it indicates a cause, but it only indicates our confession that we confess these two things, that all men are liars or sinners, so that it may be established that God alone is righteous, and justifies the ungodly who have faith in Christ. For this is the unceasing struggle with the trustworthy works saints, that they do not want to be sinners, and cannot stand it when someone condemns their Pharisaic righteousness. But what is this but that they deny that God alone is righteous? David, however, instructed by his own experience, does not praise his righteousness, not any holiness he has, or his merit, but says the opposite: "I confess that I am a sinner, and my nature and my powers in themselves can do nothing but sin when I am deprived of your gift and your spirit. This I confess of myself and of all nature, or of all men, that thou alone mayest be righteous, and that no one may know, seek, or seek to obtain any righteousness but thine.

In this way, this is the certain and actual opinion of this verse, that David, looking at the whole of nature, takes away his own righteousness from himself and from all men, and in a general confession knows how to cite and claim nothing but sin for himself, so that God may be left with this title completely and untouched, that he alone is righteous. Therefore, it does not follow from this saying what the blasphemers conclude: If God is justified by our sin, let us only sin more; but this follows that the whole world is guilty of sin, and since God alone is just, the world cannot be freed from sin by any efforts of its own, not by its

The glory of righteousness is left to God alone, who is righteous and makes the ungodly righteous through faith in Christ. Therefore, all who feel and see this wretched state of nature must seek no other way or path to righteousness than through Him who alone is righteous.

Here, then, the two main articles of the entire Scripture are established: first, that the whole of nature is damned and lost through sin, and cannot work its way out of this misfortune and death by its own powers or actions; second, that God alone is just. Therefore, whoever wants to be freed from sin must take refuge in the righteous God by confessing his sin and, according to the example of David, ask him for his mercy. Therefore, it is clear that this psalm is an exceedingly beautiful reminder (monumentum) of the Holy Spirit, which he left in the church to teach us about the greatest and most important things, which the time before us (prior aetas) could neither understand nor teach correctly, because people had departed from the word and had gone to human dreams; but we must judge according to the word and teach others. This clearly shows that only God is righteous. Therefore, righteousness in worldly government or in housekeeping cannot save us, nor can ceremonies; but even if someone is a righteous prince or a righteous husband, that is, righteous as far as the external administration of his office is concerned, he must still say before God: "Against you alone have I sinned," 2c., you alone are righteous. But we will soon discuss this more expansively.

To me, at least, this verse seems so important that, although I have already explained it briefly and perhaps a little too superficially (crassius), for the sake of those who are new to this doctrine and cannot grasp it immediately, I want to repeat in a little more detail what I said 1). We have first established this as our opinion, that the prophet is not from the

This is why Sadoletus and others try in vain to interpret the psalm of adultery. Therefore, Sadoletus and others who interpret the Psalm of adultery, which was, as it were, the fruit of the sin that exists and is born at the same time as us, in which we live and die, labor in vain. Secondly, I also reminded that this verse does not have to be understood historically or grammatically, as the words read, as if GOD could not do justice unless we sin. For it is not a matter here of sin according to its essence (metaphysice) or as a historical event (historice), but in a theological way and in the spirit, it deals with the knowledge that we pronounce and judge that we are sinners, but that God is just. Those who do not treat this saying in this way are struggling, as Paul shows [Rom. 3, 5.], with an inconsistent and blasphemous question. For they are following an opinion that comes from reason and which

Theological ones they set aside, or they err in that they understand sin to be nothing but that which is the fruit of sin, namely, sins of the deed and civil sins, and for this reason they fall into the hypocritical delusion of their own righteousness.

Since this is also a part of sin, that sin remains hidden in nature and cannot be completely and totally recognized, it was necessary that this would be revealed by God. But this revelation of sin happens through the law and through the gospel or promise. For each of these two teachings punishes the sins of which we neither recognize nor believe nor feel that they are sins, unless we are reminded by the word of God. Therefore, the prophet explicitly adds this bit: "That you may be right in your words," as if to say: We are all sinners, but you are righteous according to your word. Therefore I ascribe righteousness to you, but to me and to all men I ascribe sin, so that there is no righteousness in me, but only in you. But this I do, because I am instructed by thy preaching and thy word. For if I were without the word, I could not have this knowledge, that I have such things of myself.

1) Instead of voto in the editions, either vetim will have to be read, or an anacoluth is to be assumed.

and to all men. For he who does not believe the word will not confess that God alone is righteous, nor that he is only a sinner. Therefore, I believe your word and believe that you know my nature and the nature of all men better than we do, and according to your word I say that we are sinners and, as far as our nature is concerned, we remain sinners, so that you may be just and right and may be glorified by this confession, which says that I am a sinner, but you are just and holy.

In the same way the Holy Spirit speaks in the 32nd Psalm, v. 5: "I said: I will confess my transgression unto the Lord; and thou forgavest me the iniquity of my sin." Therefore this confession or knowledge is necessary for the forgiveness of sins, that we believe and confess that we are sinners and that the whole world is under the wrath of God. Thus the first commandment indicates the sin by the promise itself. For God promises, "I am the Lord your God," that is, "I am the one through whom salvation will come to you against death and sin. This very fact indicates that our whole nature is subject to death and sin. For what else would it serve that he promises to be our God? Thus the word of God, that is, both the law and the gospel or promise, proves with clear and certain implication that we are sinners and are preserved by grace alone. For if God promises life, it follows that we are under death; if He promises the forgiveness of sins, it follows that we are under sins and are kept by them. Now the wages of sin is death. In this way, both the threats and the promises all show the same thing. For they are not made to animals that remain in death, but to us men the voice of God has gone forth and the promise of salvation, against death, sin and hell. I have said this in many words, so that it may be clear that this saying is not a metaphysical but a theological one, and serves to convict by the word of sin, as Paul clearly says [Rom. 7:7]: "I did not recognize sin without being convicted by the word of sin.

Law", not that he had no sin or that the same had not been in the world, but that he did not recognize sin. Therefore, he is not dealing with the essence of sin or metaphysical sin, but with the recognized sin, which is recognized and felt, namely when the voice of God comes, and the sermons of God, which resound in our heart: You are a sinner, you are under the wrath of GOD and death. When this happens, only then does that battle begin in which David, as he confesses, is overcome and defeated. In this battle, human nature disputes with God whether this word is true, which says that all men are sinners, but that God alone is just. For nature objects to this judgment, and does not immediately agree with it that all its works are evil and sin before God's judgment, as the school theologians fiercely defend this proposition: man has a right light of reason, and his natural powers are unharmed. This means not only denying sin, which is revealed by God, but also denying that God Himself alone is just, who proclaims that we are sinners.

In this constant contradiction lives the whole pabstry and all schools of the sophists. They do not want to acknowledge that they are nothing but sinners, but maintain that reason has its light intact, and that if there is an infirmity in nature, then only the lower part is corrupted; this is drawn by unchastity and evil desire, but the higher part has an inextinguishable and pure light. If this were said of civil actions, it would be true to some extent, but not par excellence. For even in those things we feel how much is taken from nature by sin. But when it comes to the knowledge of God and sin or human nature, nothing is less true. Therefore, all that remains is that it is only in the divine revelation through the Word that we recognize that we are sinners and that God is righteous.

But when sins are thus revealed through the Word, two different kinds of people are revealed. One type agrees with God, and agrees with Him through humility.

The others reject God who punishes and accuse him of lying. And this is the greatest part of the world, who reject and persecute this word by which sins are punished, and I do not want this to be understood of the Turks and the Jews alone, who are inflamed with open hatred against the Christian doctrine, but the pope also does this with his church. For when they say that by the guidance of right reason they can choose and do good, what is this but denying that nature is corrupted by sin? Then the common saying of the schools is known: If a man does as much as is in him, God will infallibly give him grace. Does this not mean to accuse God of lying, who says in his words [Rom. 3, 8. ff.]: They have all sinned, there is not one who does good, not even one, they have all gone astray and have all become unfit 2c.? For he does not only punish shameful unchastity, evil lust, avarice 2c., but he punishes greater things, namely the deviation from God, that the whole nature does not ask for God and does not care about him, that it is without faith in misfortune, without fear in prosperity 2c. This proves that human reason, together with the will, is blinded and turned away from good and truth. But because we teach and defend this, we are condemned as heretics and punished in life and limb, and this is what the Psalm says here, that the wicked do not let God be right in His words, but accuse and condemn Him.

Therefore, we are to learn that it is sinful to dispute with God in this way and to punish Him in His word. Therefore, we should rather act in such a way that, even though we do not fully understand this, we still believe the one who created us, the one who pronounces it over us. For he knoweth what manner of vessel or clay we are [Ps. 103:14], but we know it not. For just as a potter's vessel, which has been cracked by a blow or some other cause, does not know that it has a crack, but the potter knows and sees it, so also we do not fully realize our defects. That is why we should

I confess my weakness and say with reverence: O Lord, I am your clay, but you are my maker and my potter. Because you say that I am a sinner, I agree with your words and gladly recognize and confess this ungodly nature, which is hidden in my flesh and in my whole nature, so that you may be glorified and I may be put to shame, so that you may be righteous and the life, 1) but I with all other men may be sin and death, so that you may be the highest good, but I with all men the greatest evil. This I recognize and confess, because I have been taught this by your promises and your law, not by my reason, which would like to cover or even adorn this godless being. But I am more concerned that your honor increase. And he who confesses his sin in this way prays this verse with the right understanding: "Against you alone have I sinned, and done evil in your sight, that you may be justified in your words."

"And remain pure when you are judged." This piece he added for our consolation. For this divine judgment, by which we are all declared sinners, and God alone is declared righteous, suffers vehement opposition and indignation, that I may say, from the greater part of the whole world, as we have shown above in the case of the Turks, Jews, and also the Papists; yes, even in ourselves we fight against this judgment of God, that He accuses us of sin in His words, that is, both by His promises and by the law. For even in the saints there still remains the feeling of this blasphemy, that they often bear it with displeasure that all theirs is called unworthy. Then there is also this attitude in the saints that they make themselves believe that they would only pray more diligently, believe more completely and praise God, if they saw that they had pure hands and sensibilities and were without all sin. But this does not mean to be a man, but to be God or an angel. And so sin, which is also hidden in the saints, disputes God's judgment. For even though the spirit is governed by the word and assents to it, it is not the word that governs the spirit.

1) In the Erlanger: "vida, et" instead of: st vita.

Paul knows [Rom. 7:23] that there is another law in his flesh, which is contrary to the Spirit and the Word. The saints also perceive and see this constant contradiction in themselves: what is it to be wondered at, then, if those also contradict who hate the word and rely on their orders and masses?

Therefore, we who accept this confession have this comfort and, as it were, the privilege that, although we are attacked by the opponents, we will nevertheless not be defeated. For we are not attacked alone, we are not contradicted alone, but our Lord Jesus Christ is attacked and the word is contradicted, that is, the promises and the divine law. Therefore, the outcome will be a desired one, as these words say, "That thou mayest remain pure when thou art judged." Thus our Lord Christ Himself must be a heretic to the pope, our God Himself, who gives the promise that sins shall be forgiven freely for Christ's sake, is condemned by the righteous monks and the holy hypocrites as the most pernicious pestilence. The reason and wisdom of our flesh condemns the wisdom of the Word of God. But hope for the desired outcome, and for the sake of the multitude of opponents, do not lose heart: the Lord himself will overcome, through us and through his word, the blasphemers of those who do not want to acknowledge their impurity and undertake to bring their own righteousness to Christ.

This delusion of one's own righteousness is the most horrible blasphemy against God. Therefore, let no one think that Christ said without cause [Matth. 21, 31]: "The tax collectors and the prostitutes may enter the kingdom of heaven sooner than you". For because these live in gross sins, they humble themselves and acknowledge that they are sinners; but these start new battles with God every hour, by which they attack grace and defend themselves. If we were alone here, we might be forced to give way to the rage of the world and the hypocrites; but here we hear the comfort that God is rejected in His words, not in our words.

and works. Thus the pope has put me under ban and condemned me, not because I am weak and a sinner, for he could suffer my sins as he suffers his own fornication, adultery and abominable kinds of fornication, which may not be called; but this he condemns, for which he puts me and other brothers under ban, because we teach the words of God, in which the sins and blindness of the papacy are punished. But even we ourselves would not be able to do this if we were not so instructed by the words of God. Therefore, when we are accused and condemned as heretics, when our teaching is condemned as harmful because it condemns human wisdom and the actions we undertake to reconcile with God, likewise when evil struggles and unrest arise, we have the consolation that He will overcome, because it is not we alone but His words that are attacked and condemned. Therefore, he will defend and protect them against the adversaries. He gives the word to instruct and to save, but if they do not want to accept it, he does not let the word be trampled underfoot for their sake, but rather he tramples the enemies of the word, as experience shows.

This consolation, which the present text shows us in the contradiction that occurs through the ban and persecution of the false church and the tyrants, must also be transferred to our minds. For as I said shortly before, such contradiction or strife against God and His words also remains in our flesh. When we experience this, we do not have to be struck down in the mind; only the spirit must remain unharmed, and believe and confess that he is a sinner. Although such blasphemies are sometimes felt against the judgment of God, it will nevertheless happen that the spirit will triumph, as God, who gives the spirit, overcomes in such a judgment. But this victory must also be understood in the spirit. For in fact we feel the opposite, and God seems to be overcome with our spirit, but the flesh and the world seem to be victorious. For we see that almost the whole world has betrayed us.

But those who agree with the words of God are very few. After that, even in us and in the saints, the flesh rages in such a way that it quenches the spirit, as it were. But be strong against these dangers and believe that you are a sinner whom God wants to have as His child, if you confess that you are lost. For by this confession, by which you disgrace yourself and open your wounds to the physician, you praise God and provoke him to the truly divine work of healing your sick mind as the right physician.

On the other hand, those who do not do this, but take credit for having some kind of righteousness, fight against their Creator and blaspheme and deny Him, because they say He is a liar, and persecute His grace and favor with which He wants to accept us; yes, they persecute eternal life itself, and make a devil out of God. Such is the awfulness of human godlessness, if we are not content with the word. But even this is sometimes felt by the godly, when they have departed from the word and this confession. For how often it happens that, if it were in my power, I would create another God who should say to me: Behold, with so great faithfulness you have taught, with so great earnestness you have prayed, with so great diligence you have planted my vineyard 2c., therefore, for the sake of this diligence of yours, you shall be the more acceptable to me. Such a God, who could be reconciled to our works, our nature would like to have, but him who forgives in vain by grace, it spurns. This is witnessed by the example of our adversaries, who can suffer nothing less than that we say that forgiveness of sins or mercy is received by faith alone. Thus the children of Israel sought a God who would reward their works, but the one who forgives by grace and accuses sins, that is the one they persecuted. According to his words, God wants to reward works gloriously, but he wants this to precede that we confess that we are sinners and trust in his mercy.

Thus there are two kinds of people, one of which confesses with David that GOD is righteous, true, and holy alone; the others are

ungodly and fight like giants against God, saying: Your word is not true; we are not blind, there is still some light in us concerning GOD; if I obey this, I will be in grace. That is to make of GOD a merchant, and to say to him, If thou givest unto me, I will give unto thee. And in this opinion all scholastic teachers agree. It is well known what Scotus says: If a man can love what is a lesser good, he can also love what is a greater good. But man loves the creature, so he can also love much more the Creator above all things. This is truly a theological conclusion, and worthy of a teacher of darkness in the church. He does not see that man, when he loves the creature most, loves it least as a creature. For who has ever been who loved a girl or gold as a girl and gold? For this love is tainted by pleasure and avarice, and can never be perfectly pure in this life of the body. Countless other sayings of this kind are found in the writings of the moderns, which show this dispute that human reason wages against the words of God. Now we say nothing here about justice in the household and in the worldly government. For even if this is perfect, this saying still remains: "Against you alone do I sin, and do evil in your sight.

Now, as far as the Hebrew grammar is concerned, the verbum which the Latin interpreter has rendered by *ut vincas* actually means: that you are pure or innocent, as if he wanted to say: If you make the declaration that men are sinners, it immediately follows that you will be judged and condemned. For reason cannot stand this judgment of yours, therefore it calls it heresy and doctrines of the devil. But what happens? They condemn and defile you with their sayings. You still remain pure, innocent and righteous, but they are found to be impure; and so the text reads

1) The giants were, as the poet Ovid writes, sons of the earth, monstrous giants with serpent's feet; they stormed Olympus to expel Jupiter from heaven, but were killed by him with lightning.

in Hebrew, but I do not dislike the opinion of the Latin interpreter. For it shows this contradiction and the outcome exceedingly clearly, is also very well appropriate to the sense. For since this statement is made: You are found innocent or pure, so the contrast follows nicely: So those who condemn the judgment of your words are impure and corrupt. But this is that God overcomes, not those who accuse God.

This is the actual and correct opinion of this verse, but we also want to indicate a somewhat violent interpretation (*catachresin*), which some people use here, in order to satisfy the listener in all respects. For although it is not the true opinion, it is not godless, and it is full of consolation. I have often made use of it with others and also in my own distresses. But it is this: When the devil afflicts the consciences by the law, as it is said in Revelation [Cap. 12, 10.] that he accuses the saints before God day and night, then it is useful to oppose Satan and say: What is it to thee? I have not sinned against thee, but against my God; I am not thy sinner, therefore what right hast thou against me? Therefore, if I have sinned, and in truth what you accuse is sin (for the devil sometimes scares the heart with petty sins), I have sinned against God, who is merciful and longsuffering; I have not sinned against you, not against the law, not against conscience, not against a man, not against an angel, but against God alone. But GOD is not a devil, he is not a devourer or an executioner, as you are, who terrify and seek to inflict death, but he is merciful to sinners, he is innocent and incorrupt, pious and just: in such a GOD have I sinned, I have not sinned in a tyrant or a murderer. Therefore you, who are a tyrant and a murderer, have no right against me. God has this right, who is kind and gracious, therefore He forgives the sin of those who confess it. He is only angry with those, only threatening those who do not want to recognize their impurity.

len, and deny that he is righteous in his words.

This is a godly view and a good comfort against the arrows of the devil that plague the conscience, but it is somewhat violent (*catachresis*), because we have shown the right sense above. But this is what the devil intends when he torments our minds with the reproach of our sins and our impurity and with the insistence on a constant purity, so that he makes us forget this saying that God alone is righteous and holy, and leads us unnoticed away from the feeling of sin and leads us to satisfaction and trust in our works. Therefore, this evil is properly met in the way I have said, that you, with confidence in God's mercy, confront your devil and say: "Leave me alone, I am not your creature. Therefore, if I have sinned, I have not sinned against you, but against my God, who is just and of great mercy. Whoever confesses in this way that he alone has sinned against God, has a God who justifies him. For since he glorifies God by confessing that he alone is righteous, God cannot fail to make him glorious again by making him righteous. Only the godly, who have begun to be born again, do this; the godless do not.

V. 7. Behold, I am begotten of sinful seed, and my mother conceived me in sins.

In very beautiful order the prophet proceeds in the doctrine of repentance; yea, he beseeches mercy, and adds the cause: For I am a sinner, and I know my sin, that thou mayest be justified, and we all be put to shame. He adds as the cause of this knowledge "the words of God", because through the word sin is revealed. But what now follows is so connected with the foregoing that it makes it clearer. For he shows the cause of the sin, and makes known, as it were, the reason for this whole business, why he confesses his sin and begs for mercy, for, he says, "in sins I was begotten. What could

can it be said more clearly and more significantly? He does not say, I have killed Urias, he does not say, I have committed adultery; but he sums up, as it were, the whole human nature in A bundle, and adds, "In sins I am conceived." For he does not speak of any works, but par excellence of matter, saying, "The human seed, this substance out of which I am formed, is altogether corrupted by infirmity or by sin; the matter itself is corrupt; the clay, that I say so, out of which this vessel began to be formed, is damnable. What more do you want? Such a man am I, such are all men: even the conception, even the growing of the fruit in the womb, before we are born and begin to be men, is sin.

Further, he does not speak of sin in marriage, or of the sin of the parents, that he should accuse the parents of sin, but says of himself, "I was conceived in sins." He does not say, My mother sinned when she conceived me; nor does he say, I sinned when I was conceived, but he speaks of the unformed seed, and pronounces that it is full of sin and is a corrupt matter (*massam perditionis*), so that the true and right sense is: I am a sinner, not because I have committed adultery, not because I have caused Urias to be killed, but for this reason I have committed adultery, for this reason I have committed murder, because I was born a sinner, indeed conceived and formed as such in the womb. So we are not sinners for the sake that we soon commit this or that sin, but these are committed by us because we are sinners beforehand, that is, a bad tree and bad seed also bring forth bad fruit, and from a bad root nothing can grow but a bad tree.

But someone would like to ask: why is marriage instituted? why did God bless marriage? why does He count even the offspring among the blessings? why should the matter from which the fruit is born be all corrupt and bad? I answer: Although God is not required to give us an account...

If it is not possible to give the body as a whole, then this reason can certainly be given, that God did not want His creature to perish for its own sake, because it was corrupted by sin. Is the whole body thrown away for that reason, because the flesh is leprous? Should he not give eyes to the man who is born, because the eyes are less sharp now than the eyes of Adam were in Paradise? For there is no doubt that the nature of all the members of the body was far more excellent before sin than it is now, having been corrupted and weakened by sin. Therefore, just as he did not take away the eyes of nature, just as he did not take away the other members, which are now weakened by infirmity, so he did not take away reproduction or procreation.

By the way, whatever may be the case with the married couple, it is not the place to speak of it here. For marriage is a good and lawful thing and instituted by God, but for this reason it cannot be denied that father and mother have corrupt flesh, and that the seed itself is not only full of shameful lust, but also full of contempt and hatred of God; nor can the sin that is in childbearing be denied. For how little better is our nature in this than that of the animals? since there is no knowledge of God, no faith in this work, but we only go to begetting children out of evil desire after having given in to reason that this is our wife. But God tolerates this sinful witnessing for the sake of His creation (*conditionem*), and does not want to take away the creature for the sake of this infirmity, but overlooks the natural infirmity, just as He overlooks the errors in government (*vitia politica*) in the worldly regime. For who does not see that there are many diseases and many infirmities in the laws and in the worldly regime? For where is there a community in which even those who order and carry out everything in the most just manner do not often approve and commit unjust things? This is not only the fault of men, but also the laws are not without fault, even when they are very much in accordance with equity. Therefore

they need a good operator who either softens them or stretches them harder, depending on the occasion.

Nevertheless, God tolerates these shortcomings, so that at least a form of the worldly regime exists, so that the children can be raised, the land is cultivated, trade and commerce exist. For if one wanted to remove all defects from the things and the laws, that would be nothing else than to abolish the worldly regime and the laws. So much the greater is the nonsense of some jurists, when they first enter the regiment or court life, who want to cut out completely everything that is ill (*resecare ad vivum*), and presume to establish an arithmetical equality in all things. Those who do this disturb the peace. But why do they not also take away this exceedingly beautiful order of childbearing, since it cannot be without infirmity? But a prudent authority must devote more effort to keeping the peace than to improving the laws. For those who do this, but neglect that, do not in truth care for the beam, but are very anxious for the mote. But we see something quite different in what God does. For although he sees that marriage is corrupted by pleasure, he does not annul marriage for that reason, nor does he take away childbearing for that reason. He would rather tolerate the infirmity than abolish what he has created (*conditionem*). Thus, even a prudent jurist in the secular regime must first of all have in mind how the peace and common tranquility of the people can be advised, so that the bearing of children and other works in the secular and domestic regime are respected. If infirmities occur, it is better not to worry about them than to raise them and disturb the peace of the community.

Therefore, neither marriage nor other good things are to be condemned for the sake of some infirmities, but one must look at the final purpose (*causam finalem*). This is in marriage the begetting of children, in the worldly regime it is the preservation of peace. Now, if in the secular regime the formative primordial

If the cause (*causa formalis*), namely the laws, is defective, if the causative cause (*causa efficiens*) is full of infirmity, namely tyranny (for that is what I now call it), then one should judge according to the more important cause, namely according to the final cause (*causam finalem*), setting the others aside. So in marriage. If the causative cause, the spouses themselves, is evil, if the matter is evil, these corrupt causes are to be tolerated, so that childbearing may be preserved, an exceedingly beautiful and admirable work of God. But this I have said in passing; now I return to the matter with which we are dealing.

This verse of the Psalm therefore instructs us about the cause of sin, why we are sinners. For the prophet publicly confesses that he was full of infirmity through his own fault, not that of the parents alone, while he was still borne as fruit (*embryo*) in the womb, and while he was still being formed, so that the mother nourished a sinner with her blood still in the womb before she had given birth to him. The same is true of all who are born and have been born and are yet to be born into this world, except Christ alone. For the fact that John and others were sanctified in the womb does not mean that they should not be born in sins, just as in adults who are sanctified by the Spirit and faith, the flesh is still full of infirmities.

And this article of original sin is one of the most noble doctrines of which reason knows nothing; but it is learned, like others, from the law and promises of God. But it is Paul alone among the apostles who dealt with this article with great seriousness (*ex professo*). However, he may have been passed over by the other apostles because this teaching was handed down to the descendants, as it were, from hand to hand. Moses also touches on this article in his prayer Ps. 90, 8: "Our iniquity you set before you." For there he indicates not indistinctly that we are under wrath before God, and suffer death for the sake of God's wrath. But this wrath is aroused by the fact that our sins

God are known. The cause of these sins and the wrath of God is that our flesh in Paradise is corrupted by the fall of Adam, so that man has a perverse fear and a perverse love against God and against himself. This teaching, as I have said, has been handed down from hand to hand to the descendants. But Moses and David also wrote it down, and after them the apostle Paul. However, they undoubtedly drew this wisdom from the first commandment and from the promise made to Abraham and Adam. For from these it is evident, because they promise blessing, that our nature is under the curse and under the kingdom of the devil, in which is darkness, hatred of God, distrust 2c.

So this verse contains the reason why we must all confess that we are sinners and that all our actions are condemnable before God, but that God alone is just. And this doctrine is most necessary in the church; neither the pope nor the Turk believes it. For I can testify by my own example that I did not know this doctrine when I had already been a doctor of theology for many years. Mau argued about original sin, but it was said that it was taken away in baptism, and that apart from baptism there was a light left in nature; if one followed this, grace would infallibly be given. Yes, it was taught that even in the devils the natural powers were unharmed, and they had only lost grace. But who does not see that this is highly contrary to each other when one says that the natural powers are unharmed and that nature is corrupted by sin? For the will is indeed a natural thing, but they do not simply speak of the will, but of the will of the good, and they call this a natural power (*naturale*). Therein lies an error. The will remains in the devil, it remains in the heretics; I confess that this is a natural power. But this will is not good, nor does the understanding remain right or enlightened. Therefore, if we want to speak rightly of the natural powers according to this psalm and according to the way of the Holy Spirit, then we must call these very things natural powers, that we remain in sin.

and in death, that we will, understand and desire corruption and evil. For this agrees with this passage of ours in the Psalm and can be proved from it.

This may be enough of the confession of original sin, or the sin that is born with us, which is nevertheless hidden from the whole world, and is not revealed by our powers, reason, or thoughts, but is rather obscured, defended, and excused by them. Therefore, God's word from heaven is necessary, by which this impurity or infirmity of nature is revealed; indeed, we who believe the word want to confess that this is so, even though the whole of nature cries out against it, as it cannot do otherwise. This doctrine is the most difficult of this psalm, nay, of all Scripture or theology, without which it is impossible to understand Scripture rightly, as the dreams of the moderns prove. Now follows:

V. 8. behold, thou delightest in the truth that is in secret; thou makest me to know the secret wisdom. 1)

In many respects the Latin interpreter, whoever he may have been, is to be blamed in this passage, for besides bringing the members of the verse into confusion in an inconsistent manner, he also causes an ungodly sense. For what is this that he translates, "an uncertain wisdom"? For let this be far from Christians, far from their teacher the Holy Spirit, that he teaches uncertain and doubtful things. For here, if anywhere else, there must be a complete certainty of faith (*πληροφορία*), a very certain conviction or truth, and an infallible light by which God, through the Word and His Spirit, fortifies, confirms, and makes our consciences completely certain. Therefore, let us cast away this uncertain wisdom which the inexperienced interpreter offers, and let us both look at the words and seek the proper meaning of this passage.

So far, we have heard what the summa of Christian doctrine is, namely, that we he-

1) Vulgate: Leos 6nim verÜMem Mtzixktä, ineerta et oeeMta [spientias tuaemiüj

know that we are completely in sin, yes, that sin is also present when we are conceived and formed in the womb of the mother. Therefore, those who recognize their impurity in this way and rely on mercy obtain mercy because God is glorified by this confession and has promised that He will show mercy to those who trust in Him. Now that he has brought this doctrine to a conclusion, he adds a refutation for the sake of contrast, with which he refutes those who teach or do such things that are contrary to this doctrine.

But also here it is to be noted what I have reminded above, that the prophet does not speak of God in and for himself (*de Deo absoluto*), but of the God of the children of Israel, who had revealed himself by a certain word, by certain miracles, also in a certain place in Jerusalem, and whose promises, happened to the fathers, were present. This God is not a vague God, as is the God whom the Turks honor, but He is a revealed God and, I say, a sealed God, who has circumscribed Himself by a certain place, a certain word and certain signs, so that He can be recognized and grasped, so that the godly efforts would not wander to and fro, as it happened with the Jews, who left the temple and the word, and chose heights and groves, and yet wanted to be regarded as rendering service to God. David does not speak of such a God, and it is worth the effort to pay attention to it, but he speaks of the certain God or the one who has made the promise, who has revealed himself through the word and the promises and through outward signs. Such a God includes the future Christ in himself, because David does not speak of God as such or in and of himself, but understands by God such a God who, according to the promises made to the fathers, will save the world through the Son. There is therefore a great difference between David, when he speaks of GOD, and between a Turk, Jew or Papist. For these speak and act of an unfaithful God, because they undertake such religious services that

are without the Word of God, and are not attached to the outward signs by which God has revealed Himself in Christ; but this is called losing Christ altogether. But I often remind you of this, so that we do not lose Christ in the face of too much spirituality (*religione*), apart from whom no other God should be worshipped or sought.

Therefore, the prophet has started a general refutation here, as if he had someone in mind who would make these objections against the already presented doctrine: You condemn everyone in general, while it is known that there are many good and holy people, whose life and conduct are good (*integri*) and blameless; are you alone wise? as they object to us nowadays, when it is a matter of similar things: Are you alone the church? Do you alone have the Scriptures? For the whole dispute revolves around the name of the church. Because this name entails that one can judge about religion, about salvation and eternal life, therefore the opponents fight furiously about this name. They do not want to be seen as having erred or taught ungodly things, and even though they cannot deny obvious abuses that have gradually occurred, they do not want to give up the name of the church for that reason. Thus the Turk stubbornly claims this name, that he worships the true God. So also the synagogue; so also our adversaries defend it with force and weapons. They hold their worship against us, and boast, as Paul says of the Jews, that they are zealous for God, and that they take pains to attain to the promises made to the fathers with watchfulness, with alms, with sacrifices, with prayers, with ceremonies, with hard living, and other things. Is not this then, I say (they hold this against us), holy and good? Why then do you say that all men are sinners? Why then do you declare that all are subject to damnation?

Therefore, in this verse, faith and the Holy Spirit answer that this is the wisdom of the world, but not the wisdom of God. Therefore, this sentence nevertheless remains true, that all men are sinners. For

The world thinks that it is holiness when you wear dirty clothes, when you hurt your body with a hard life, and when you torture yourself, when you go to some corner far away from the traffic of people and restless business, and do something unusual there. These lies and this made-up holiness the flesh understands and admires. Hence it is that people are caught much more quickly by a hard life and unusual behavior (*moribus*) than by right doctrine and the Word. For nothing is sacred in the sight of the world but that which deviates exceedingly far from the ordinary way of life. Hence the celibate state, hence the monasteries, hence the strange ways of dress and food, hence the innumerable other follies, not only among us, but also among the Jews of old, and nowadays among the Turks, who devise and do the most wondrous things in order to gain the fame of a special holiness among their own. But it is not necessary to fetch examples from the Turks; just look at a monk in his cap and examine him properly, then, after you have been well instructed in right and Christian holiness, you will marvel at and laugh at what our adversaries adorn and praise with great titles, yes, for the sake of which they set aside marriage and civil offices as obstacles to their holiness. These are the ones who, when they hear this generally valid sentence that all men are sinners, hold out their lives and their observances to us with full cheeks and say: Do you want to condemn us all? Do you want to hand us all over to the devil?

Yes, says the prophet, I condemn you all with all your wisdom, with all your holiness and righteousness, "for you are a GOD who delights in the truth that is hidden" or: you demand the same. For this is how the words in Hebrew read: Thou lovest not falsehood, hypocrisy, and vain pretense (*fūcum*). Therefore, the word "truth" cuts off and condemns everything that is done apart from this teaching, as well as everything that can be of works and righteousness among the Turks, Jews and Papists apart from the word of God. Therefore

he calls all these righteousnesses and all this holiness a lie, in which he not only has no pleasure, but which God also hates and curses to the highest degree. For the word "truth" must be applied not only to words, but in general to the whole of life, so that everything we say, think, live and are should be certain and true, so that not only the world is not deceived, but also we ourselves.

In the race there is also a civil (*politica*) truth, which shows itself in words and in life, but it is of such a kind that many infirmities attach to it. Thus Pomponius Atticus, Aristides, Socrates were truth-loving people and without falsehood; thus among the pagans there were many right (*veri*) husbands who kept the fidelity they had pledged to their wives in an excellent way; thus one also sometimes finds a merchant who sticks to the truth. This civil truth is demanded by God, and daily examples show that it does not go unpunished if someone does something against the civil truth. But even this truth is not pure, if one looks at the judgment of God, because many shameful defects are attached to it, and God demands a much greater truth. Therefore, he adds, "You delight in the truth that is hidden," as if to say: The civil truth, which is in the world, can be afforded, and is at least recognized by men. That is why Aristides and Pomponius had a great name among their fellow citizens. In contrast, we hear daily complaints about disloyalty, lies and deceit, which people use in their dealings with each other. But the truth, in which God delights, is not so before the eyes, but is hidden and is not seen. Therefore, even if Mahomet had been a truthful man in worldly matters, he was still a liar before God. Although I have been a monk in truth and without falsehood (for I often cite myself as an example, as Paul writes of himself [Phil. 3, 5.] that he had been a Pharisee in truth), I was nevertheless a liar before GOD because of the superstition and hypocrisy that I did not see. For it lay hidden, concealed under the appearance of holiness (just as the hidden

Truth is not seen) until it was punished by the Word, and this hidden truth was revealed. Such people the prophet has in mind when he says: "You have a desire for the truth that is hidden", as if he wanted to say: Those arid glittering saints who walk along blamelessly in zeal for the law, hoping that God loves them, who are ready to die for their righteousness, and think that they and their deeds are a delight to God, these are the ones whom you hate to the utmost, with a divine and unconquerable hatred. For you only delight in the truth that is hidden, but you do not love those hypocrites and hopeful saints who walk in a fictitious spirituality. In this way David combines teaching and comfort with refutation. For we, who by God's grace have the truth, and confess that we are sinners, but that God is righteous, cannot so completely believe that we are loved by God as those people who live in lies believe and boast with a full mouth that they are loved by God, rather, when we see that the great multitude of the wicked are so stiff-necked and so presumptuous of their righteousness and God's love, we often lose heart. But we should rather act in such a way that we despise this joy and these triumphs, and firmly believe that they are like dung in the eyes of God and an abomination, because God hates glitter, both in doctrine and in life. Therefore, the godliness of the hypocrites is the highest godlessness, their truth the greatest lie. On the other hand, those who feel their weakness and recognize their sin are in the truth.

Why then are they afraid? Why are they not confident, since they hear here that it is said: "You are a God who delights in the truth that is hidden"? Both, therefore, happen in a wrong way: the shining saints are presumptuous because of love, while they are under the hood, and again, those who are in the truth, who believe and confess according to what they hear from God's word, namely that they are sinners from the time of their conception, and that God alone is righteous, doubt concerning love and fear wrath. For the nature

cannot think otherwise when she sees her sin than that God hates sinners. This is our wisdom, but David teaches another wisdom that is heavenly, namely, that God does not want to reject but love right sinners, again, that those who dispute this confession and do not want to be sinners are liars, and that God hates them. For why should a sinner be afraid, or why should he fear wrath, since God sent His Son to make amends for sins? Therefore, He does not want to settle with us because of righteousness, but demands this, that we recognize that we are sinners. This recognition or confession is the truth, not a philosophical one, which reason hears and sees, but a theological and hidden one, which only the spirit hears and sees. Therefore, God delights in this truth, whereas everything that is not in this truth He hates, as He says elsewhere [Ps. 5, 5.]: "You are not a God to whom godless beings please." Therefore the Pharisee deceives himself, since he remembers his fasts and virtues, and thinks that he pleases God for that sake, for God delights in truth that is hidden. Therefore, although there is civil truth, there is nothing but hatred and wrath of God if this theological truth is not added.

Instead of: In obscuro, vel absconditam sapientiam doce me [In obscurity teach me, or "teach me the secret wisdom"]. But it is the same opinion with the foregoing. For wisdom and truth are the same, as Paul also uses both words in the same sense, Rom. 1, 18.: "Those who hold out the truth in unrighteousness," and 1 Cor. 2, 7.: "The secret, hidden wisdom of GOD," that is, which no one has known, to which reason cannot consent and be subject, as Christ says Matt. II, 25.: "Thou hast hid it from the wise, and revealed it to babes." He does not say that it is hidden from the foolish and simple, but from the highest in the world, the best and wisest, that they understand nothing of this wisdom. Therefore, the reason why he calls both truth and wisdom hidden is obvious,

because experience teaches this sufficiently. For why do the highest in the world, why the pope and the bishops persecute our gospel? For no other reason than because this teaching is hidden, which they cannot see and suffer, as the Jews could not bear the shining face of Moses. Then they cast their stupid eyes on the Scriptures and read from them a number of mutilated and not properly understood sayings [Luc. 6, 37.]: "Forgive, and you will be forgiven", "God created man as a righteous (rectum), and gave him the choice" [Sir. 15, 14. Vulg.]. They insist on such sayings in a foolish way and reveal their nonsense to the whole world.

Therefore, this is the truth, this is the wisdom, that I know God and myself, that God has promised to redeem all who feel that they are sinners and that there is no salvation, if we do not speak with the prophet: "Against you alone have I sinned and done evil in your sight; I was conceived in sins," 2c., that is, if we do not believe that everything is condemned and evil that is reason and will in man. And this wisdom and truth lies hidden, or is secret, because even when it is taught it is not believed, nor is it grasped by the world. Yes, we ourselves often fight against this wisdom and cannot completely throw away the trust in our works, but think that even if we often err and fall, we are not mistaken in all things before God. The one thinks that he is blameless because he is a good husband, the other because in contracts (contractibus) he performs everything without deceit. Although the Turk must doubt his religion, he does not think that God is so cruel that he should corrupt all others, and only let us Christians be wise, especially since they lead a very strict life as far as outward conduct is concerned.

This is said and thought in a good zeal, but these are truths that are publicly before the eyes (in publico), but in secret they are lies. However, God suffers this civil truth and also adorns it with rewards for the sake of public peace.

because otherwise the coexistence of people (*societas et vita*) could not exist. And yet, this civil truth does not help us before God and before God's judgment, but there must be the hidden truth and wisdom that we confess that we celebrate sinners, and yet, when we feel death, an evil conscience, and the arrows of the devil, raise ourselves up again and say: Thou delightest in the truth that is in secret, that is, thou delightest in those who confess their sins and believe thy promises, that thou mayest be merciful to such people. And also in this piece is the hidden wisdom and truth, that hearts cannot be lifted up to believe that they are loved in their sins. In this way, both our conscience and the world prove that this wisdom is very hidden towards both cords. For if reason did not resist this wisdom even in believers, nothing would stand in the way of this life being a paradise for us, full of joy and gladness. But the flesh remains flesh even in the saints, and contends against the Spirit and the Word, and feels that God not only does not hear sinners, but even hates them. This is the wisdom of the flesh, as I have often said, which contends against this hidden wisdom of the Spirit.

So this verse is a kind of refutation: that there are other wisdoms and truths in the world, 1) which are evident and visible, and can be brought to the world by their glitter, but before God they are ungodly and lying and foolish, especially if any trust is based on them; But let this be the only and right truth, yet a hidden one, that one confess that God alone is righteous, and we sinners, and that He will not reject sinners who recognize their misery and trust in mercy, as they deserve, but will make them blessed by grace. Everything that is taught, believed, lived and done apart from this truth, as if it were meritorious or conducive to eternal blessedness (promoto-

1) It seems to us that the comma which precedes *sint* in the editions should be placed after it.

rium that I say so) is condemned, because God has pleasure only in the hidden and heavenly wisdom. For this, as I have said, is how the text is to be translated, that our wisdom is not uncertain, but quite certain, and yet secret, or hidden in mystery. Our reason does not understand this wisdom unless it is enlightened by the Holy Spirit. If you compare the wisdom of the world with this wisdom, you will see that it is as uncertain and unstable as the sea. For what is constant or firm in the world? But our wisdom is stable for this reason, because it is outside the world, based on God and His Word.

But here it is also to be remembered that the second part of this verse is, as it were, a little prayer. From this arises the question: Since he already has this hidden wisdom before, why does he ask for it? For he who can sing: In you alone I sin, but you alone are righteous, he truly already has this wisdom hidden from the world and knows it, not only concerning the knowledge of sin, but also concerning the knowledge of grace, otherwise he would despair. Why then does he ask? Why does he say, "You will make known to me the secret wisdom, since he already has and knows it? I answer: The godly feels more sin than grace, more wrath than favor, more judgment than salvation; whereas the godless feels almost nothing of wrath, but is as sure as if there were no wrath anywhere, no God anywhere who is a righteous avenger. But this happens most with those who pretend to some semblance of spirituality (religionis), as the Franciscans ungodly boast that their order (religionem) is quite like the life of Christ; therefore they do not pray, because they live in such security. A godly man, on the other hand, the more he feels his weakness, the more zealous he is in prayer and perseveres with it. For at the same time as this wisdom, stopping in prayer also sets in. For since the feeling of sin does not cease, neither does the groaning and praying, in which the completion of this wisdom is requested. This prayer is not empty talk, but a fervent desire directed against the struggle of the flesh,

which we feel, so that as the feeling of sin is great, so also the feeling of grace and the comfort of the Spirit abound. Therefore, in Zechariah [Cap. 12, 10. the spirit of grace and prayer are associated with each other. For the godly always speak as if they were sinners, as indeed they are; but because they are in the truth, they are loved by God, and are in grace. But because this feeling of grace is exceedingly weak for the sake of the flesh, even when they have the forgiveness of sins, they still pray for the forgiveness of sins and sigh for it. On the other hand, sure sinners say: I thank you that I am not like other people, like the Pharisee in Lucas [Cap. 18, 11.].

This is the reason why a godly person asks for grace who has already begun to be godly and has a taste for this teaching. This taste causes a greater thirst, because hearts are not yet satisfied with the firstfruits of the Spirit, but would like to have the fullness, as Paul says, Phil. 3:12: "Not that I have already apprehended it, or am already perfected; but I pursue after it, whether I may apprehend it after I am apprehended." In this way David also acts here as if he wanted to say: I know that thou lovest this truth, which thou hast begun in me: now cause me to grasp it more surely, and not to doubt. For he confesses the wickedness of our flesh, that though the world with its troubles and temptations were not, yet we ourselves are against ourselves, and fight against this wisdom; and our flesh will not believe it, nor agree with that which we teach and say.

V. 9. Defile me with hyssop, that I may be clean; wash me, that I may be white as snow.

So far, the prophet has generally rejected all righteousnesses, wisdoms and truths, and put forward this certain truth that is hidden, or the secret wisdom that confesses sins and hopes in the mercy of God who makes sinners righteous, as the same opinion is John 1:12 f.: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, who believe in him.

who have not been born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God. There he rejects everything in general that reason and what only a man can do, that is, everything that all men can do according to their nature and their powers without the Holy Spirit, and leaves only the trust in the name of Jesus. To this general refutation he now adds a special refutation, namely that of the righteousnesses of the law or Moses, that the Mosaic sprinklings are nothing, even Moses does not properly sprinkle those whom he wants to sanctify, but another, much more powerful sprinkling is needed.

The law had various sprinklings, which were done with hyssop and wool, as is known from the second book of Moses [2 Mos. 24, 8. 29, 21.], where the priest and all holy utensils were consecrated by sprinkling. The reason for this consecration was not only that the things dedicated to holy use should not be put to unholy use, but that the people should know that everything in the tabernacle was holy and consecrated, and for this reason should regard all other places where holy things were performed as unholy and flee them. This was the principal cause of consecration, 1) which is quite out of place with our apes, that is, the pope, who, according to Mosiah's example, consecrates churches and vessels. There is only the occasion that this is instituted out of foolish imitation, but not according to a certain word of God. Another kind of sprinkling is 4 Mos. 19, 2. 9. with the ashes of the reddish cow, which they called a water of atonement. Hence our apes introduced holy water into the church, which they praised to men as if it were a second baptism, and attributed to it a significant power, that it washes away daily (venialia) sins and drives away the devil. A thousand superstitious things have sprouted from it, which foolish old women have invented. However, although it is not evil per se, a creature

For if the consecration, which was commanded by God in the law, was not intended to consecrate sins, because everything is sanctified by the word of God, and everything is sanctified for the saints, then it is an exceedingly great impiety to attribute a justifying power (justificationem) to the creatures thus sanctified, as water, salt 2c. For if the consecration commanded by God in the law was not intended to inspire confidence that sins would be forgiven thereby, or to provide consolation for the conscience, but was only a custom, instituted for outward sanctification, so that there would be a distinction between the vessels of holy and worldly custom: what then shall we ascribe to the consecration of the papists, which was invented without the Word, without any cause? All the worship of this people was bound by God's voice to the tabernacle in which the mercy seat was. There they had the certain testimony of the word that God would accept the sacrifices and hear their prayers. In order to praise this place even more to the people and to turn their hearts away from the idolatry committed by those who performed sacrifices in other places and used other utensils for the sacrifices, Moses was commanded by a divine commandment to consecrate both the temple and the vessels of the temple. In the New Testament it is quite different. For not only on this mountain, but in all places God is worshipped and adored in spirit; then all sacrifices are accomplished by the One Sacrifice of Christ. And in the Holy Communion we do not have one sacrifice, but keep the memory of the sacrifice that was made by Christ, and what Christ sacrificed at that time we do not offer again, but distribute it to the faithful according to His word. Therefore, churches as well as utensils are not to be consecrated, since we not only do not have a word of God by which it is commanded to us, but also the cause that was present in the law is not even there.

Therefore, this Psalm speaks in general of the Mosaic washings and purifications, and denies that they serve to make righteous, but calls for a different purification, which is not done with asop and sprinkling water, but through the mercy of God, who forgives sins.

1) Instead of oonseratio in the editions will read 60086ci-Åtionis.

This teaching no doubt annoyed very many. For the sermons of the prophets clearly show how much nonsense they were about sacrifice, because they wanted to atone for sins through sacrifices. Therefore, even at the time when, according to God's command, the sacrifices were still in effect, the prophets preached very sharply against the sacrifices, in which God obviously said that He did not want the sacrifices that He had instituted, as can be seen in Isa. 1:11 and Ps. 50:8 ff. For they were not instituted by God with the intention that sins should be taken away by them, for only the one perfect and completely directed sacrifice of Christ could accomplish that, but they served first of all to distinguish this people from all other peoples, so that one might be certain of the people from whom Christ was to be born; secondly, the fact that these practices were ordered in such a way served to prevent them from inventing their own divine services. For human nature is such that it cannot be without worship. Therefore, if it does not have the Word, it devises such things as the examples of both the pagans and the pope show.

When the people sacrificed in the temple, which was designated by God 1) for the sacrifices, they knew that they had rendered the outward service to God according to His word, but the outward service is not useful for salvation. Therefore the right and certain inward service remained, namely the faith in the future Christ or the blessed seed; this service was not only extremely pleasant for God, but also necessary for salvation. Now the greater part left this service and wanted to become blessed through the sacrifices. The prophets cried out against these people and condemned the outward service without the inward service, in order to teach that one must first believe in the blessed Seed, after which one should also perform the outward practices of the legal service. Therefore the prophet leaves these sprinklings of the law, even rejects them, and asks the Lord

1) In the original edition, in the Wittenberg and in the Jena: <i>um intus; Erlanger: clivinitus. We have followed the latter reading.

UM another sprinkling and another mop. Here, no doubt, he had to hear from others: Lord King, what do you ask? Do you want to be washed and purified, why don't you use the ablutions prescribed by Moses? Do you despise them as useless? Why then are they commanded by God? Because it is not Moses' commandment, but the Lord's. But David publicly shows that those washings are useless and defiled, if someone wants to cleanse the heart by them. The garments may be cleansed so that the people may live in outward holiness, but for purity of heart and a good conscience, a different sprinkling is necessary.

Therefore this is an obvious refutation against the falsifiers of the law, who wanted to use the law to wash away sins, although the washing away of sins was promised, not in the works of the law, but in the blessed seed, which the believers expected. For the forgiveness of sins has been the same at all times, namely Christ yesterday and today [Heb. 13:8]. Therefore those were saved by trusting in Christ who was to come, Ivir by trusting in Christ who is given to us, who suffered and is glorified, and through Him receive forgiveness of sins. Therefore David has to do with the same subject, of which the epistle to the Hebrews deals, since it speaks thus [Hebr. 7, 11.]: Since the Levitical priesthood is sufficient for the forgiveness of sins, why then is another priesthood promised, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek? Thus in this passage: If the sprinkling of the water of atonement had had power to wash away sins, David would not ask for another sprinkling. But because he asks for another sprinkling and another mop, it follows that the whole service of the law is not only useless, but also harmful, if anyone attaches to it the opinion that righteousness is in it. He therefore leaves it that the Jews wash themselves according to the law, but in the right way and as far as the law allows it, namely, that the people may be holy to their God by outward holiness, but not before the law.

God in the spirit. For this holiness of the spirit, which is holiness before God, requires another sprinkling, which does not come from the blood of the cow or the sprinkling water, but from the blood of Christ and faith in Christ.

Therefore, everything depends on the fact that the Jews should use the sprinkling correctly, or expect that their salvation and the whole law would perish. For as far as the work is concerned, the Mosaic sprinkling could still be kept, if these two main points remained intact, first, that one believed in the already appeared Christ, not in the future Christ as under the law. For the godly sprinkled themselves in the law for this reason, that they might confess and testify that they believed in the true sprinkling of Christ. Secondly, if righteousness were not attributed to that sprinkling, but the sprinkled ones considered that they were not a hair's breadth better before God after that sprinkling than before. If these pieces remained unharmed, someone could sprinkle himself without danger. But our Jews sin in both respects, both in that they still expect Christ, as if he had not yet appeared, and in that they ascribe righteousness to their customs. But this is to deny that Christ has come into the flesh, and to blaspheme our heavenly righteousness, which comes from our faith in Christ. Before we allow this, let us rather suffer Moses to perish with all his customs and ceremonies.

Therefore, one must pay attention to this distinction of David. For if that righteousness, which was commanded by God in the Law, did not make one righteous before God, what shall we say of worldly (politica) righteousness? What shall we say of other works and services, which men undertake without God's commandment, as the whole pabstry stands in self-chosen services (*ἰδ-ελο&^σχειαῖζ*), as it is called Pau

lus [Col. 2, 18]. Therefore we should seek the sprinkling of the Spirit and the inward washing, which Peter calls 1 Petr. 1, 2. a sprinkling of the blood of Christ, with which we are all sprinkled, who have the

Hear and believe the gospel of Christ. For his mouth, which teaches the gospel, is the mop and the sprinkling rod with which the teaching of the gospel, dyed and sealed with the blood of Christ, is sprinkled on the church. Those who do not believe this word are indeed sprinkled, therefore the blood of Christ and the word of Christ will also judge them, but their unbelief makes that they are not washed away. The sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, serve for this sprinkling, because in both we are sprinkled with the blood of Christ. For in baptism we are baptized into the death of Christ, and in the Lord's Supper the blood and body of Christ are distributed to the Church. So we also hear this sprinkling in the service of the Word, that Christ has done enough for the sins of the wayer. Nothing else remains but that we, as we hear this in the Word, and as it is offered and communicated to us in the outward signs (symbolis) of our faith, also firmly believe and establish our hearts by trusting in this sprinkling.

And between the present church of believers and the believers in the Old Testament there is no other difference than that they believed the sprinkling to be future, but we believe that it has appeared and has been accomplished. And this is the sum of this verse, that David first rejects the cleansings of the law as not profitable for righteousness, then desires to be sprinkled with the word of faith of the future Christ, who will sprinkle his church with his blood. This word prays that he may hear and believe, as the following will show more clearly. By this faith the saints in the Old Testament were preserved, just as we are preserved, although our situation is much better, because we see this in bright light, and not only hear it in words, but also receive it wrapped in outward signs, in baptism and the Lord's Supper. Therefore Christ says [Luc. 10, 24.], "Many prophets and kings desired to see what ye see." Yet the same faith is on both sides by which we and they are saved. Therefore, if anyone should ask how David could have asked for this sprinkling with

the blood of Christ, which had not yet been fulfilled, the answer is easy, namely, that the same sprinkling had always been in the world by which believers are washed from their sins, namely, the sprinkling by the blood of Christ; there is only a difference of time, namely, that for those the sprinkling was a future one, but for us it was a present and past one. If some do not receive it because of their unbelief, it is not the fault of the blood of Christ, but of their unbelief.

This teaching is easy, but it takes great effort to keep it, and to fortify the heart so that you firmly believe that no satisfaction, no work, no law, no righteousness is worth anything before God except this one sprinkling. For this faith is challenged by many thoughts. For even civil righteousness cannot be completely despised by the human heart, and because the Law of Moses is commanded by God, it leaves the delusion in the heart that the one who brings this righteousness of the Law to God cannot displease God. Then our flesh and our reason cling to us too much that we gladly agree with it. We see that in civil life those who do evil are punished, and that hardly anyone escapes the punishment he deserves, and now we are even supposed to believe that God, who follows these minor things on earth so closely with His judgment, will not proceed with the same severity against our sins, but will forgive them out of grace! In addition, there is the devil, a particular enemy of this doctrine, who is primarily intent on eradicating it.

Therefore, it is difficult to remain firm that the way of justification consists only in hearing the word of that sprinkling and agreeing to it in faith. For just as the flesh, when it feels its sin, bears sorrow because of a work it has done, so it is anxious to make amends for it by another work. This nature of ours has also been strengthened by custom and habit. For this doctrine has been most practiced in all the churches and in the monasteries, that men should remember how to atone for their sins.

would be enough. All the better are the young people at this time, who are not so corrupted by these wrong opinions as we who have lived under the pope. For they can grasp much more easily what David teaches here, namely, that the atonements belong to the worldly government and to the household, so that we do not put Moses in heaven, but leave him with his Jews on earth and in this bodily life. For there is One who ascended into heaven, who also descended, the Son of God and of man, Christ Jesus [John 3:13]. This is He concerning whom we have the commandment that we should hear Him [Matt. 17:5], this is He who bore the sins of the world [John 1:29]; this One satisfaction, this One washing away or sprinkling, is by which we are saved; and this is the ground of our salvation, that when we hear this, we should not be faithless against the divine revelation, but believe. For that a new life must follow does not belong to satisfaction, but to what we owe to do, and to obedience. And because the Holy Spirit works this in us, no merit can be derived from it that we would have in order to propitiate God and atone for our sins, which, as we are taught, have already been atoned for through Christ.

But, as I said, it is difficult to hold on to this teaching. As long as we are out of temptation, it seems easy, but when the time of peace is over and we think about the wrath of God, then we find out how much effort it takes to believe this firmly. Therefore, I want to warn everyone not to be presumptuous. This can easily be taught and heard and believed, but to persevere even in the midst of temptation is a special gift of the Holy Spirit. It is so easy to fall into thoughts contrary to this teaching, namely, that one must do enough, and such like deceptions of the devil. Therefore, when you hear about atonement, only testify firmly to the atonement that it is the true one, which is called and is an atonement of faith, namely, that Christ Jesus has borne your sins. If

If this gratification exists alone and completely pure, without any addition to your gratifications, then you may mortify and kill your flesh, then you may practice love with zeal, serve your profession and do everything that may be done according to God's word. This obedience is dear and pleasant to God, because it is done with the right intention, namely, that obedience may be shown to God, not in order to accomplish one's own gratification. But what does a monk do? what a Turk? what a Jew? They undertake various works and do many things in order to serve God, but with such a heart and such confidence that they want to erase their sins and reconcile with God. But what is this but denying Christ, who is set by God to do enough for us, and that for the sake of this satisfaction we should hear Him, praise Him, and serve Him in faith? Because those people do not do this who want to do enough themselves, but for this reason remain in the monasteries, for this reason keep their righteousnesses, fasts and prayers, because they hope that God will look upon them graciously, they will therefore hear the judgment of the Father, who will command that they be thrown into hell with their fasts and righteousnesses, with which they have done nothing but blaspheme the Son of God.

Therefore, when one comes to the article of righteousness before God, all law must be rejected as of no use for us to become righteous, and nothing else must be admitted than the law of the Spirit or the promise that Jesus Christ died for our sins. This is the word of grace and promise, by which nothing is required of us as in the law, but complete satisfaction is offered through the perfect sacrifice, Christ; this sacrifice put an end to Moses and the whole law. Therefore, David so freely throws away that imperfect sprinkling of the law and asks to be sprinkled, not by a Levitical priest, but by the Redeemer, God Himself, so that the conscience may be cleansed with such purity, which is purer than snow.

Also this is to be remembered that what our Latin translator expresses by: *Adsparges me hyssopo* [you will sprinkle me] in Hebrew reads: You will absolve me or absolve me from sins. But the sense remains the same, and the word "sprinkle" 1) can be tolerated, because the atonement was done by sprinkling with water to which the ashes of the reddish heifer were added. Because this sprinkling was done with hyssop, David calls it the mop, so that it is clear that he is speaking against the legal defilement.

But here a theological question arises: how we can become purer than snow, since the remnants of sin always cling to us. I answer: I have often said that man is divided into spirit and flesh. Therefore, as far as the whole man is concerned, the remnants of sin remain, or, as Paul calls it [2 Cor. 7:1], the defilement of the spirit and of the flesh. The defilements of the spirit are doubting grace, imperfect faith, grumbling against God, impatience, imperfect knowledge of God's will 2c. The defilements of the flesh are adultery, evil desire, murder, strife 2c. But the defilements of the spirit reach the highest degree by the heretics, the defilements of the flesh by the other aversions in the world, so that both the spirit and the body are defiled.

Although because of these aversions we are never as pure and holy as we ought to be, we have already obtained baptism, which is entirely pure, we have obtained the word, which is entirely pure, we have also obtained in the word and baptism by faith the blood of Christ, which is truly also entirely pure. Therefore, according to this purity which we have in spirit and faith from Christ and the sacraments which he instituted, it is rightly said that it is purer than snow, yes, purer than the sun and the stars, although those stains of the spirit and the flesh cling to us. For they are covered and showered with the purity and cleanness of Christ, which we have received through the

1) Instead of: aZspsMnũo in the issues should probably read LÜsperAentii.

Hearing the Word and attaining faith. But it is well to note that this purity is an alien purity. For Christ adorns and clothes us with his righteousness. Now if you look at a Christian excluding Christ's righteousness and purity, as he is in himself, you will not only find no purity, even if he is exceedingly holy, but, I say, a devilish blackness. Furthermore, what does the pope do in his teaching other than to separate us from Christ, to take away baptism, the preaching of the gospel or the promise of God, and to leave us alone? But this means taking away all purity from man and leaving him with nothing but sin.

Therefore, if they say, "Sin always clings to man, how can he be so washed away as to be whiter than snow?" Answer, "Man must be regarded, not as he is in himself, but as he is in Christ. Then you will find that believers are washed and cleansed by the blood of Christ. But who is such an ungodly man that he should deny that the blood of Christ is wholly pure? What cause, then, is there why the believing man should doubt his purity? Is it because he feels that he still has the remnants of sin in him? But all this purity must be a foreign one, namely that of Christ and his blood; it need not be ours which we put on. In the household, is not the Son the heir of the Father, who, because of his weakness, is carried, cared for, and governed by a lowly handmaid? If you want to look at the carrying here, is not the son, who is the heir, the servant of the maid whom he has to obey? And yet, for this reason, he does not cease to be the heir, because he is the child of the father of the house and not of the maid. This is also how a Christian is to be judged, and the eyes are to be firmly fixed on what kind of person he came out of baptism as, not on how (*qualis*) he was born of the parents. For the rebirth is better than the first birth, for it is not through a man, but from God and His promise, which our faith takes hold of, as the prophet now shows more extensively.

V. 10. Let me hear joy and gladness, that the bones you have crushed may rejoice.

It is not without reason that I repeat so often that in this psalm not only an example is given of how David was justified, but the right doctrine itself is presented, in which way and how justification happens with all people, so that this psalm is a general rule of how sinners are justified. One part of this rule is given in the last two verses, in which he refutes all the other ways by which men try to cleanse themselves of sins and reconcile themselves to God, either by the works of the law or by other works of their own choice. For he requires not only the truth that is hidden against hypocrisy, but also another sprinkling than the law had. So that this may be more clearly understood, he adds, "Let me hear joy," as if to say: Sprinkle me in such a way that you give me joy to hear, that is, that I may have peace of heart through the word of grace. Further, in the Latin there is an emphasis on the word *auditiui* [give joy to my hearing], though in the Hebrew it is somewhat different, "Let me hear joy"; but the sense is the same in both cases. For he simply means that the forgiveness of sins, which alone brings joy, is given by the word alone, or by the hearing alone. For even if you torment yourself to the point of death, even if you shed your blood, even if you bear and suffer everything that is possible for a human being with the greatest willingness, still nothing is accomplished, but only hearing brings joy. This is the only way by which the heart is brought to rest before God; everything else that can be done leaves doubt in the hearts 2c.

Therefore, all this must be understood to be significant and emphatic, for it belongs to the refutation begun above. For, by contrast, he rejects all other paths that men take with anxious consciences, because, though they have an excellent appearance, they are nevertheless

do not bring the joy that hearing brings. For the fearful consciences are just like the geese; when the vultures pursue them, they try to escape by flying, while they could achieve this better by running. On the other hand, when wolves threaten them, they try to escape by running, while they could do this safely by flying. Thus men, when they are in distress of conscience, run hither and thither, undertake this work and that; thus they only heap up dangers and useless labors, while this is the only true and certain way of healing the conscience, which David here calls sprinkling, by which the word is heard and accepted. For the whole way of justification, as far as we are concerned, is a suffering one (*ratio passiva*). But if we are most holy, then we want to be justified in an active way, that is, by our works. But here nothing must be done by us, nothing must be undertaken by us, except this one thing, that we incline our ear, as also the 45th Psalm, v. 11, reminds us, and believe what is said to us. This hearing alone is a hearing of delight, and this alone is what we do through the Holy Spirit in the matter of justification. So it was a hearing of delight for the gout-broken man when Christ said to him [Matt. 9:2], "Be of good cheer, my son, thy sins are forgiven thee." So it was a delight for David to hear from Nathan [2 Sam. 12, 13.], "Thou shalt not die." 2c.

Therefore this is the brief epitome of this teaching: When thou liest in sorrow or feelest the divine wrath, seek no other remedy and allow no other consolation than the word, whether it be preached to thee by a present brother, or that it come to thee by the remembrance of the Spirit through the word heard before, as there are such sayings [Ezek. 33:11]: "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he turn and live." Likewise [Ps. 30:6], "He delighteth to live." Likewise [Matt. 22:32.], "GOD is a GOD of the living." Likewise [Joh. 3, 16.]: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that all who believe in Him might live.

believe him, shall not perish, but have eternal life." These and similar sayings involve the hearing of delight, whether through a foreign mouth or inspired by the Holy Spirit. But this is also hidden truth and wisdom, which inexperienced people cannot comprehend. Therefore, the teachers of the pope bring far other ways by which they want to heal the troubled consciences.

Furthermore, this verse is a glorious testimony with which the ministry of the word or the oral word is adorned. For since it desires the hearing of delight, it clearly indicates that the word is necessary to comfort the heart, whether it is brought by a brother or whether the Spirit gives the word that was heard before. Therefore, this verse fights, first, against all those who apologize or neglect the outward word and are carried away by their idle and futile thoughts. Secondly, it also fights against those who, frightened by terrors of the heart, do not want to accept the word, but either disbelieve or flee from the word to works, just as they flee to their thoughts. On both sides one errs, both in thinking and in doing. But in this one you do not err when you hear.

And this is the doctrine for which we not only bear the name of heretics, but also suffer punishments, namely, because we ascribe everything to hearing, or to the word, or to faith in the word (for these are all the same), and not to our works; nay, in the custom of the sacraments and confession we teach that we must look chiefly to the word, that we may put away everything from our works and direct it to the word. For in baptism is the hearing of joy, as it is said, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" [Marc. 16:16]. In the Lord's Supper is the hearing of joy, as it is said, "This is my body given for you," "this is the cup in my blood poured out for you for the remission of sins." In confession, or to name it more correctly, in absolution and in the custom of the keys is the

Hearing the joy: Faith, your sins are forgiven through Christ's death. Therefore, although we exhort to the sacraments and to absolution, we do not teach anything about the worthiness of our work, that this work has power if it is only performed (*ex opere operato*), as the papists tend to teach about the Lord's Supper or about their sacrifice, but we point people to the word that the main part of the whole action is the word of God, and hearing.

On the other hand, the pope leaves the word pending and disputes the manner (*forma*) and the power of the sacraments, likewise the complete repentance (*contritionibus*) and the half-repentance (*attritionibus*). Through this teaching I have been so corrupted in the schools that, by God's grace, I have hardly been able to turn to hearing joy alone with great effort. For if one wants to wait so long until one has repented sufficiently, one will never reach the hearing of joy, which I experienced in the monastery very often with great pain. For I followed this doctrine of repentance, but the more I repented, the higher rose the pain and the evil conscience, and I could not receive the absolution and other consolations which those to whom I confessed gave me. For I thought like this: Who knows whether one may believe such consolations? Later it happened by chance, when I complained to my preceptor about these temptations of mine with many tears, of which I really suffered many and also because of my youth, that he said to me: "My son, what are you doing? Do you not know that the Lord himself has commanded us to hope? By this one word: "He has commanded," I was so strengthened that I knew that one should believe the absolution, which I had heard many times before; but, hindered by my foolish thoughts, I did not think that I had to believe the word, but rather heard it as if it did not concern me.

Therefore, warned by my example and danger, learn this doctrine of justification, which the present verse holds forth, that righteousness is given to him who believes the word, that you make a distinction between the word of the absolver and your own conduct or

your newness, as between heaven and earth. For even if repentance is the highest and most perfect, it is still something very small in terms of righteousness, even a mere nothing, through which we neither earn anything nor do enough. For what merit is there in recognizing sin and bearing sorrow for it? Therefore, turn your eyes far away from your repentance and listen with all your heart to the voice of the brother who absolves you, and have no doubt that the word of your brother in the sacrament or in absolution is spoken by God, by God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so that you are completely attached to what you hear and not to what you do and think.

The pope does it quite differently. He first urges repentance, and from repentance he then wants to determine whether the word is powerful or not, as if the promise of God had no power in itself, but required the addition of our merits, our repentance or satisfaction. And they hold this doctrine so firmly that they condemn us, who have a more sound doctrine, as heretics and inflict on us every kind of torture. Therefore, in all the bulls this clause is added: To those who have rightly confessed and repented; as if the certainty of absolution depended on the certainty of repentance, whereas the heart can never determine when it has sufficiently repented. The avarice of the popes has also sold these letters of indulgence for a great deal of money, but, dear Lord Christ, take away this indulgence and rather allow the popes to be angry with us than that we leave the certainty of your word and base ourselves on our newness, as they teach. For all certainty for us is in your word, in which you reveal that the sins of the whole world have been atoned for and blotted out through your sacrifice, death and resurrection. When the heart hears this word, then the joy arises of which David speaks here. For how should the heart not rejoice when it hears that the greatness of God's mercy goes so far that He bestows grace with all pleasure, and does not look at the insufficient new, but simply looks at His mercy and our sorrow? This hearing is followed by the confidence that we speak:

I have been baptized, I have taken the body that was given to the cross for me, I have heard God's voice from the church minister or from a brother, through which the forgiveness of sins is announced to me. Through this confidence, however, death and all other evils are overcome.

This I gladly say in many words, so that you may know that the way (forma) of the forgiveness of sins is that it is not by works, but by hearing. The papists sing and pray this psalm daily in their churches, but there is no one who understands what this joy is with which the godly rejoice in the Lord, namely, a certain confidence in the mercy of God and a conscience that does not doubt the forgiveness of sins. If this confidence or knowledge, or this hearing, is not there, then one cannot have any firm comfort. For I have also learned this through my own experience; for after waking, studying, fasting, praying and other very hard exercises, with which I tortured myself almost to death as a monk, the doubt remained in my heart that I thought: Who knows if this is pleasing to God? Happy, therefore, you young people, if only you would also be grateful to God for such a great gift, that you now hear the healthy and right way in which one arrives at righteousness, that you can say in your hearts: If I have not prayed or done as much as I should, or that it would be enough, what is the matter? because I do not build on this sand. If I have not repented completely, what of that? But that is my real concern, and I rely on the fact that God speaks to me through a brother: "I absolve you in the name of Christ and through his merit. Of this word I believe to be true, and my faith does not deceive me. For it is built upon the rock of the words of the Son of GOD, who cannot lie, for he is the truth 2c. In this way, hearts are filled with true joy and true delight of the Holy Spirit, which is entirely based on the certainty of the word or hearing.

But here also you must be made aware of the contrast. For he seems to look covertly at Moses, since he says [Vulg:]

"You will give joy to my hearing," as if to say: I have already heard long enough the law and Moses, who has a heavy tongue; take this hearing from me, for it is a hearing of the wrath of GOD and of eternal death. Therefore I ask for the hearing of bliss, which comes through the word of grace and the forgiveness of sins. Then it will happen that the frightened bones will become joyful, that is, the bones that are crushed and broken by the feeling of sin; this feeling causes the law of God in the hearts. But just as the disciples of Pabst do not understand the joy of which he spoke above, so they cannot know what this bruising of the bones is. For they have never heard the words of the law, nor have they heard the sermon of death and despair, but discourse of these things without experience, as a blind man of a painting. Therefore, this knowledge also belongs to that hidden wisdom of which he said above. For I have often asked many in the monastery to tell me what bruised bones were, but since they had no experience of such afflictions, it was impossible that they could have said anything right and certain about a thing unknown to them. For not all suffer the same temptations, but God gives this to each one according to how he can bear it. And yet all must experience this feeling of the law and of death, even if some experience it 1) more, others less; some feel it only in their last hour. But it also happens according to the letter that in this feeling the bones are shattered, that is, that the strength of the body and the powers are broken and suffer extraordinarily, as we experience it in sudden danger of death, also in other great distresses.

But this contritio of the bones is a very different contritio from that of the pope, who commands that we contemplate and enumerate the sins committed. (meditemur); after that he imposes exceedingly foolish penances, with pilgrimages,

1) It seems to us that instead of eara in the editions should be read euna, referred from 8ensu.ru.

Fasting, almsgiving 2c. For if to the true being bruised is not added what Nathan said to David [2 Sam. 12, 13.], "The LORD has taken away your sin," it is impossible that the bones should not remain bruised. For this wound of the conscience can be healed by nothing but the word of the divine promise, namely, that we believe that our God is a Father of mercy and of all comfort, likewise that we believe that the Lord is pleased with those who fear him and hope in his goodness [Ps. 147:11], that we know that he wants us to hope, and that if one does not hope, the punishment of eternal damnation must be suffered. But why would he command that one should hope if he did not want to forgive? Why would he send his only begotten Son to such an ignominious death if he did not want us to be saved through faith in him?

These and other such sayings are the true sprinkling and the most effective medicine by which the bruised bones are healed and the conscience is raised. But those who doubt this will of God, and look upon their unworthiness, that they are not like Paul or Peter in holiness, can never have a quiet heart. Therefore, put everything that exists anywhere in righteousness or in sins, either in you or in the whole world, completely out of sight and out of heart, and say: Although I am unworthy to receive these great benefits, namely the forgiveness of sins and the grace of God, God is not unworthy that I believe Him to forgive sins, as He promised in His word. For this inference does not apply in theology: I am a shameful and wicked sinner, so God becomes a liar (dementitur) who promised that He would forgive sinners their sin. Rather, you are to make this inference that David made above: I would rather be a sinner than for God to become a liar. But that I hope for mercy, I do in confidence in his word, which is preached by Christ 2c.

But here, the reader must refer to the property

It is necessary to draw attention to the uniqueness of the Hebrew text. For so it is said in the Hebrew: "And the bones which thou hast broken shall be glad. But here it is a great offense why the prophets observe with special diligence that they pronounce that the evils come from God Himself, while it is true that God does not inflict evils in Himself, but uses them as means and instruments. For thus the Lord says to Satan in the Book of Job [Cap. 2, 3]: "Thou hast moved me to destroy him without a cause," when history clearly shows that Satan set fire to the house, killed the children, and told him to despair and murmur against God. These, I say, are in truth works of the devil, and yet the Lord says, "I have destroyed him." In the same way David also says here: "Thou hast bruised my bones," while yet God has done nothing else than to withdraw his hand and his spirit, and to leave David, that he might be afflicted with the fiery darts of Satan, with which the latter filled the heart with such sadness and despair that he knew not where out nor in. For he is a father of lies and a murderer. Such a tool or means is also the law, by which sins are accused and condemned. God uses these means for his own sake, so that he may humble us and take away the presumption of our works, so that we may learn that we live only by the grace and goodness of God.

But we want to answer the objection: Why is this attributed to GOtte, since he actually does not do this, but uses his means? The devil kills, the law accuses, and yet the holy scripture attributes both 1) to GOtte. This is the reason: so that we are preserved in the article of our faith that only One God is, and do not make several gods with the Manichaeans. For these assumed two primordial beings (principia), one of which was good, the other evil. In good things they ran to the good God, in evil to the evil God. But God wants us to be like that.

1) In the original edition and in the Wittenberg: utrinaue; in the Jena and Erlangen: utrUm^us. We have followed the latter reading !

He does not want us to be among those of whom Isaiah says [Cap. 9, 13]: "The people do not turn to the one who strikes them. For this is what our nature tends to do: in sudden terrors and dangers it turns away from God, because it believes that He is angry, as Job did [Cap. 30, 21.]: "Thou art turned unto me into a cruel one." But this means to invent another God, and not to remain in the simple faith that there is only One God. For God is not cruel, but He is a Father of comfort [2 Cor. 1:3]. But because he delays help, our hearts soon make an angry idol out of God, who always remains the same and constant. The prophets want to prevent this by saying as if from one mouth [Is. 45, 7. Amos 3, 6. Micah 1, 12.]: "I am the LORD, who create good and evil." This is done so that when the sun is veiled by clouds we may not think that the sun has been entirely taken away from the world, or that a luminous body has become a black and dark one; for the sun retains its light, but by the clouds we are prevented from seeing it. Thus, God is good, just and merciful, even when He strikes. Whoever does not believe this, steps away from the unity of faith that there is only One God, and invents for himself another God, who does not remain the same, who is sometimes good, sometimes evil. But it is a great gift of the Holy Spirit that one believes that God is gracious and merciful even when He sends evil.

V. 11. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Here again he makes it clear, as you see, that he is not speaking of the sin of adultery alone, for he says, "Blot out all my iniquity." But he also shows us here a special experience that the saints have in this spiritual battle. For when the heart is completely taken up with the feeling of sin, not even the righteous can have sufficient peace, but pain remains mixed with the hearing of joy, which does not suffer from hearing the

Take joy as much as is enough. For they have the firstfruits and, as it were, a droplet at the fingertip, by which the hearts are refreshed; they do not have the fullness of joy, but hang, as it were, on a thin thread, where a thick rope would be very much needed to bear the burden of the body. Thus the saints begin to feel this hearing, but have not yet drawn so much from it that they have become drunk. Therefore, David asks in this verse for the growth and completion of this hearing, that it may so fill the heart with this knowledge of mercy that nothing may remain to trouble it.

We also need this request throughout our lives, that this knowledge and this confidence in mercy may grow in us from day to day, as Paul and Peter exhort us to this growth in faith. For you see how great a danger it is if, immediately after reading a book or two, we persuade ourselves that we are teachers of theology. The examples of the sects are before our eyes, who, although they had hardly drawn a drop of sound doctrine, as teachers of the whole world have filled everything with their false opinions, of baptism, of the Lord's Supper, of obedience to the law of God, of obedience to the authorities 2c. For since they have never been in these battles of the spirit, nor grasped this doctrine of trusting in God's mercy, it was easy for the devil to overthrow them by wrong opinions. Therefore, warned by these frightening examples, we should pray with David that this mercy may be increased for us, saying: O Lord, hide your face from our sins, and blot out all our iniquities, that our peace and joy may be complete.

But this very request proves that the article of justification is one that can never be learned. Therefore, those who think that they know it completely are certain that they have never begun to learn it. For because new battles arise daily, sometimes from the devil, sometimes from our flesh, sometimes from the world and our conscience, through which we

How can we be carried away to despair, anger, unchastity and other vices, and how is it possible, with our great weakness, that we do not often fall or at least waver? And then, in how many deeds does this life entangle us, by which we are gradually made to forget this joy. Therefore, the greatest need is that we pray that God will always flow or sprinkle us with this hearing of joy, so that we will not again be overwhelmed with the sadness that the feeling of sins brings with it.

Therefore, I understand this verse to be about the growth of this peace and righteousness, by which the feeling of God's wrath and sin is overcome. For although the righteous in truth have forgiveness of sins, because they have confidence in God's mercy, and are in grace for Christ's sake, yet the remorse of conscience does not cease, and the remnants of sin by which they are challenged. This, therefore, is an immensely great effect of the Holy Spirit, that one believes in the grace of God, and hopes that God will be gracious and favorable; and this confidence cannot be held fast without the fiercest struggles which both the daily occasions 1) of sorrow and sadness, and the weakness and distrust born with us, excite in the flesh. For even if today I am of a cheerful disposition because of this hearing of joy, tomorrow something will occur that will cause me to be troubled, since it will come to my mind that I have either done what I should have avoided or omitted what I should have done. These storms and floods never cease in the heart. For this purpose the devil also watches, when he notices that our hearts are not well fortified by the promises of God, so that he may arouse in us other delusions of anger and disquiet, by which the hearts melt away like salt thrown into the water. Therefore, this prayer is a necessary one, that he prays: "For-

1) Both the Wittenberg and the Jena Allsgabe have retained the misprint of the original edition: oratioN68 instead of: 0063, 8101168. In the 1539 edition it is indicated.

birg thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities." "All," he says, "both the past, and the present, and the future, for daily I sin; blot out all, all, lest I fall into despair, or forget thy mercy. Here you see again that the forgiveness of sins is not based on what I do, but on God blotting them out by His mercy, as Paul also says of the handwriting that is against 2) us.

V. 12. Create in me, O God, a clean heart, and give me a new conscience.

We have now finished the most important part of this psalm, in which the most important articles of our religion have been treated, namely, what repentance is, what sin is, what grace is, what justification is, and what the causes of justification are. What now follows belongs, I believe, to the gifts of the Holy Spirit which follow the forgiveness of sins. For Paul teaches this distinction, that grace is something different from the gift. Grace is the favor by which God accepts us, forgiving sins and justifying us freely by grace through Christ. But it belongs to the category of relation (*praedicamentum relationis*), of which the dialectics have said that it has the least essence (*minimae entitatis*) but the greatest power. Do not think that it is 3) a quality, as the Sophists dreamed. For the forgiveness of sins depends par excellence on the promise which faith accepts; not on our works or merits, but on God calling us to Himself by grace through the breaking of the law, so that we recognize that He is the giver of grace. Gift or *χαρίσματα* is that which is given by GOD, who is reconciled through Christ, to believers after forgiveness. To these gifts, in my judgment, belong the next three verses. For I hold that they must be connected, because three times he has given the

2) The Wittenberg and the Jena have (like the original of 1538) *intra* instead of: *contra*, as it should read according to Col. 2, 14.

3) The Erlanger has a colon after *esse*; there should be no punctuation mark there.

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Word "spirit" repeated: the certain (rectum) spirit, the Holy Spirit and the joyful (principalem) spirit.

But I pass over the useless disputations of the schools, whether he speak of the efficiente Spirit, or of the divine Person, or of the gift of the Spirit. For what edification is there in discussing this in detail? Since we have the clear word of Christ [John 14:23], "We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." So the true (verus) Spirit dwells in believers not by gifts alone, but according to his nature (substantiam). For he does not give his gifts in such a way that he himself is elsewhere or asleep, but he is with his gifts and with his creature with sustaining, negating, giving strength 2c. Therefore, the prophet asks that after he is made righteous and has received the forgiveness of sins, this feeling of God's mercy be deeply implanted in his heart by the Holy Spirit. Therefore he makes use of these words, "Create in me, GOD, a pure heart." For he does not speak of any effect lasting a moment, but of the continuance of the work begun, as if to say: You have begun Your work in me, that I might trust in Your mercy, now therefore complete what You have begun; fortify, O GOD, what You have wrought in me. For not he who has begun, but "he who perseveres to the end, the same will be saved" [Matth. 10, 22].

Our sophists are in the error of dreaming that it is enough to have begun once. For they teach that grace is a quality that is hidden in the heart. If someone has it locked up in his heart, as it were, as a precious stone, then he will be graciously regarded by God, if he cooperates otherwise with his free will; likewise, if someone has the first grace, even if it is barely a speck, then he will be blessed. But we teach and believe differently about grace, namely that grace is a continuous and constant effect or exercise by which we are seized and driven by the spirit of God, that we do not disbelieve in his promises, and think and do what is pleasing to God and pleasing to him.

well pleases. For the spirit is something living, not something dead. But as life is never idle, but always, as long as it is there, has something to create (for even in sleep life is not idle, but the bodies either maintain their growth, as happens with children, or one perceives other works of life in the breathing and beating of the heart), so also the Holy Spirit in the godly is never idle; he has something to create, which concerns the kingdom of God. Therefore, I remind you to get used to understanding these theological words correctly, so that when you hear the word "create", you do not think of a word that lasts only for a moment, but of the continuous guidance, preservation and growth of the spiritual effects in the believing heart.

But here one must pay attention to the contrast which the prophet indicates by asking for a pure heart. For he looks with bashful eyes at the glittering pretense (larvam) of the work saints, as if he wanted to say: I see many baptisms at the sacrifices and in the temple, likewise also at home; soon the garments, soon the walls, soon the whole bodies are washed away; but where is the cleansing of the heart? For the hearts are stained with all kinds of idolatry, with vain opinions of God, with evil desire and other vices that arise from not having a true knowledge of God. These fine bathers (balneatores) neglect all this and occupy themselves with the care that the bodies and the clothes are clean. But, O dear God, purify my heart, that I may know your will as it is, that is, as a good and gracious will, so that I may not be led away from God to ungodly opinions by rapturous thoughts. This is actually the pure heart, of which also Christ Matth. 5, 8. says: "Blessed are the pure in heart." For this purity of heart must be related to the spiritual effects. For although the heart is also defiled by unchastity, anger, envy, and other vices, yet this impurity is such that reason and the flesh recognize and reject it. So there are still glorious speeches that have been spoken among the Gentiles.

were held against the vices to which unholy men shamefully indulge.

But the prophet prays against the impurity that reason does not recognize, namely, that hearts should be undefiled and pure from useless and false opinions about God, and hold that God is kind, gracious and merciful, who does not delight in the death of the wicked, but that he should repent and live [Ezek. 33:11]. For when the heart feels that God is angry, idolatry immediately follows, by which we either persuade ourselves that God is other than He is by nature, and we seek other remedies (remedia) that are forbidden in the Word, or we despair altogether. Against these defilements of the heart prays the pure heart that thinks rightly of God, that loves God as the Savior of sins and the Giver of life. For he sees this danger that those who have this knowledge are nevertheless provoked by the devil in many ways to false opinions about God.

Therefore, this is the short epitome: The prophet recognizes the grace that he has forgiveness of sins and a gracious God. Therefore, he prays against the danger that the devil usually tries to arouse, that he may not be led to other opinions, but that this knowledge of the divine goodness may increase more and more every day, so that we may be of good cheer in all things that we do or suffer, and know that we are in grace for Christ's sake, and that God is pleased with all that we do, even that we eat and drink for the body's need, that we do our work, and that in this way the heart may remain pure in the constant and right knowledge of God and in confidence in God through Christ, and firmly hold that all our doings please God, not for any merit or worthiness that we have, for all things are defiled, but for the gift of faith that we believe in Christ. But it is not in our power to accept such a heart, but it is God's creation; that is why the Spirit wanted to use the word "create" here. For these are vain dreams, what the school theologians have fooled us about the purifications of the heart. But as it is not in our

forces, but such a pure heart must be created by God, so we also cannot preserve what God has created against the devil. Therefore, we see how often I am stained by sudden temptations and sadness 2c. Therefore, this prayer must never cease because of the creation and also preservation of a pure heart.

What follows: "And give me a new certain spirit," is, as far as the sense is concerned, the same as "a pure heart." Also with the Germans the word "heart" is almost the same as what the Hebrew calls "spirit". For where in Latin the words *anima*, *intellectus*, *voluntas*, *affectus* are used, the Germans translate all these by the word "heart." But the epithet, which he gives here to the spirit, actually means immovable, steadfast, complete, firm, certain, undoubted; after many misgivings we have despaired of rendering this word accurately in German. Incidentally, it is constantly opposed to doubt and the diversity of opinions. Therefore, it is actually a certain or a right spirit that fortifies the heart against doubt and various doctrines, as well as against the promptings of the devil, who strives to lead us away from these beliefs: Faith [, and to persuade us] that God is not merciful and gracious. And it is seen that Christ calls the same "the Spirit of truth", who does not pretend anything hypocritically, which is not, but does and teaches certain things. Thus it is said in the books of the Kings of Solomon [1 Kings 2:12]: "And the kingdom of Solomon was made very stable" (*stabilitum est*), that is, it is confirmed (*ratum factum*), made certain. Thus it is said, "certain fruits," of those which, according to their appearance, prosper in a very certain manner. So also it is said, "a certain spirit," that is, a certain and undoubted faith, which does not wander about in opinions, as children are wont to do, but which increases and becomes quite confident, as Paul also says [Rom. 8:38], I am firmly convinced and am certain. For when it comes to grace and the forgiveness of sins, all doubt must be cast far away. This, however, is not in our power, but with God, who creates such things.

This piece also belongs to the refutation of the hypocritical (*Iarvatam*) righteousness of works, which leaves the heart impure and the mind uncertain. For a monk who has kept his rule with special zeal for many years and done everything he could, still lacks this certainty. Therefore, after this knowledge of mercy, the first thing one must ask is that this knowledge remain a certain one, that the heart not doubt the mercy of God, and not wander idly about in ever different thoughts, which either the hearts invent for themselves, or are produced by ungodly teachings. For this gift, the creation and giving of the new spirit 1) is necessary, which happens through constant practice in spiritual struggles or temptations. For the examples are before us, that many have begun with us, who all accepted this doctrine with unbelievable applause, but afterwards have either been led by sects to other opinions, or have fallen into open contempt and hatred against the gospel. This misery had no other cause than that they did not have this certain spirit, but since they thought that they were quite learned in this theology, they were plunged by the evil spirit into such hopefulness that they either sought something new, or out of envy thought to suppress us. Therefore, certainty of spirit is necessary, not only because of the devil, but also because of our flesh and the world. For these want to snatch this certainty of the teaching from us, as it were with united troops. But those who are outside 2) teach us this far better than we can say in words.

V. 13. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.

Behold the great humility, how anxiously he fears the dangers that threaten those who are made righteous, and the forgiveness of sin-.

1) According to the misprint index; of the 1539 edition, *innovstto* is to be read here instead of *invovstto*, which the Wittenberg and Jena editions retained from the first edition.

2) Erlanger: *exteri*; Wittenberger and Jenaer: *caet "ri*. We have assumed *exteri* in the meaning: *hui toris suut*.

have this. For without the Holy Spirit he could not pray this, and yet he who already has the Holy Spirit pleads and sighs that he may not be rejected, may not be abandoned, may not sin again and come to ruin, as if to say: I have the flesh in me, which contends against the Spirit; therefore stand thou with me, and keep me, lest I sin again, as I sinned before, when I was forsaken of thee. Do not reject me like this, and do not take away your Holy Spirit from me, that is, give me constancy, that my body may be sanctified in me. For as he asked above for a certain Spirit, that is, a great assurance (*πληροφορίαν*), as Paul

[1 Thess. 1, 5.] calls it, and for a full knowledge of the mercy of God, he asks here that the Holy Spirit will not be taken away from him and that he will not be rejected, which I refer to the sanctification of the flesh and its mortification, or to the new obedience that must follow in the justified: That a husband may live chastely with his wife, and kindly with his neighbors; that the authorities may be diligent in their office in the government of the commonwealth; that they may not look through the fingers at the sins of their subjects 2c. For it is known what the new obedience entails in the justified, namely, that the heart grows daily in the spirit that sanctifies us; that after fighting against the remnants of the wrong opinions of God and against doubt, the spirit also progresses to govern the actions of the body, that unchastity is put away, that the heart becomes accustomed to patience and other moral virtues.

To a man who is steeped in the theology of the sophists, it seems incongruous that such a holy prophet should ask vehemently for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as if he had none. But we, who are instructed both by experience and by such examples, know that no one can ask for grace unless he is justified, and likewise that no one can ask for the gifts of the Spirit unless he is sanctified. For since such people have received the firstfruits of the Spirit, they desire and seek to receive tithes also.

and because they are born again to life, they wish to completely do away with death and its remnants, and hope and seek perfection, of which they experience daily how far they are still from it. That is why David prays that he will not be abandoned to his thoughts, but that he will be kept pure in heart and deed before the eyes of God. For here man easily falls into the trap, as the parable of the servant in Matthew 1) [Matth. 18, 26. ff.] shows, who was so humble and pious before the eyes of the Lord that he obtained the release of all his guilt through the mercy of the father of the house, but no sooner has he gone out from the Lord than he falls upon his fellow servant and becomes a merciless death thrower and tyrant.

But here again I recall the same as above. Because David asks this of the Lord, he clearly shows us that it is not our doing or in our power to preserve these gifts, but that we are in danger of being rejected. This being rejected happens when the Lord leaves us to ourselves and takes away His Spirit, as the Scripture says [Ps. 81:13]: "He has left them in the stupor of their hearts." When this happens, we immediately come to trap. For we either let our evil lusts shoot the reins, as David did in adultery, or fall into presumption or despair. Therefore he says, "Cast me not away," that is, do not leave me with your sanctifying Spirit, for if that happens, I am in truth rejected and lost, "and do not take away your Holy Spirit from me." For he confesses that he has the Holy Spirit, but not yet perfectly or wholly, for it is only the firstfruits of the Spirit; but after this life it shall come to pass that we shall obtain the fullness of the Spirit, and become as He is. These two parts must be joined together in such a way that we may be preserved by the Holy Spirit from all uncleanness, inward and outward, of the spirit and of the flesh, so that our hearts may become like a clean dwelling place, to which the return is not open to the unclean spirit, as Christ also teaches in the Gospel. Now follows of the third gift of the Spirit.

1) In the Latin editions: apu<1 l'ueam.

v. 14. Comfort me again with your help, and the joyful spirit contain me.

Now this is the third gift of the Spirit which he asks to be bestowed upon him, and it is truly a glorious order which the prophet keeps, as if to say: I am now justified by the grace of God, because I am assured of the forgiveness of sins; secondly, I am also sanctified, because I walk in obedience and the holy life of the commandments of the Lord, and daily this gift of the Spirit increases; now the third thing remains, that a great and strong courage may be added, which confesses this justifier and sanctifier also before the world, and does not allow itself to be dissuaded from this confession by any dangers. Therefore, we have translated this verse in German in such a way that it is obvious that he asks for a joyful heart that despises all dangers. For joy here actually means steadfastness, or an undaunted courage that fears not the world, not the devil, yea, not even death. Such courage we see in Paul, as he speaks with a joyful, exultant and full spirit [Rom. 8, 3.]: "Who will separate us from the love of God?" It seems to me that David is asking for the same here, that he may freely confess his God and despise all the dangers of the world.

And this order also indicates the matter, as the prophet says in another place [Ps. 116, 10.], "I believe, therefore I speak." For the knowledge of the truth is immediately followed by confession, by which we refute all other doctrines. But the next thing after confession is what follows: "But I am greatly afflicted." Therefore it is necessary that the joyful spirit fortify us, so that we do not become fainthearted in this humiliation, but with a great spirit despise all dangers. For it is impossible that the world could suffer with equanimity this general judgment that all men are liars, especially when you call lying what they praise as truth and the highest service of God; as is the doctrine and life of the whole papacy. They seek to destroy this judgment as blasphemy with fire and sword. Therefore, we suffer not only the bitterest hatred, but also the danger of death and the cruelest tortures because of this confession of ours. But what

is it because of that? This knowledge does not suffer us to be silent, and the world does not suffer us to speak, so it is necessary that we be strengthened by the Spirit so that we do not abandon the confession because of the dangers.

That he therefore says: "Comfort me again" indicates that he is almost broken by these dangers. Therefore, he asks that this joy be restored to him, which is a joy in the help of God, that is, he wants his heart to be strengthened in such a way that he does not doubt that God will stand by him and save him in the dangers that confession entails. This confidence so invigorates one's courage that one can safely despise all terrors and dangers, just as I, too, have experienced this glorious gift through God's grace, that I, against the will of the emperor, the pope, the princes, the kings and almost the whole world, have confessed Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, completely freely with teachings and letters, even under a thousand dangers to life that threatened me from my angry enemies and also from Satan himself. Thus said the Lord to Jeremiah [Cap. 1, 17-19]: I will make your face brazen, that you shall not accept it, though anyone contends against it. And truly, the teaching ministry in the church requires such courage that despises all dangers, indeed, all godly people in general must be prepared not to shrink from becoming martyrs, that is, confessors or witnesses of God. For Christ does not want to be hidden in the world, but he wants him to be preached, not between the four walls, but on the roofs, so that the gospel may shine in the world like a torch on a high mountain or a tower. But if this happens, soon there are dangers of every kind, and in truth we are stuck, as they say in the German proverb, between door and hinge, and there is nothing else to comfort us but that God has promised that He will not leave us.

This is the third gift that fills Christians with great pride, not against God, but against the hopes of the world and the devil, so that the more they oppose us, the more defiant we become against them.

go. If we do, they cry out that we are incorrigibly obstinate; and we do not deny it, for that is what our office and profession require. So, they say, you are damned. This does not follow, for here a distinction must be made: for before God I am so humbled that I am afraid even at the mention of His name, and pray daily without ceasing that the Spirit may be given to me, that faith may be increased 2c. Here I recognize nothing but my extreme inability and lament it. But when I look at the world, I realize that I possess immeasurable treasures. Therefore, as I humble myself before God, so I rise again towards the world with a great pride that despises it by rejecting the teachings of the world as errors and its whole life as nothing but sins. Hence arise the struggles, the contradiction, the tortures, the condemnatory judgments, because of which David here asks to be strengthened by the joyful spirit, as if he wanted to say: If you do not strengthen me against these dangers, I will be oppressed by terror.

Now, as far as grammar is concerned, the word XXX means a prince. That is why our Latin interpreter made it: *principali Spiritu* [with a princely spirit strengthen me, instead of: with the joyful spirit. But XXXX 1) undoubtedly comes from the verb XXX and means a willing person, a volunteer who desires and wants of his own free will and undertakes something with great courage. But such a spirit is a gift of God, with which he fills the heart, so that we are not frightened by the devil and the world, a spirit that undertakes something not out of compulsion of any law, but for free, out of desire to do good; although it can also be passively said: a spirit of benevolence (*munificus Spiritus*), which is given out of pure grace. Thus, in these three verses, the prophet explains those gifts that are given to those justified by faith. The first is complete assurance or certain trust in the mercy of GOD. The second is sanctification, through which the old man, with his sufferings, is made free.

1) In the editions: Nedabuū.

The third is the free confession that without distinction everything that will not yield to right doctrine will be condemned, including emperors, princes, popes and the whole world. The third is the free confession that everything that does not want to give way to the right doctrine will be condemned without distinction, also emperors, princes, popes with the whole world. Now the prophet moves on to other things that follow from this joyful spirit.

V. 15 For I will teach the transgressors thy ways, that sinners may turn unto thee.

Only here does the prophet begin to speak of his works, after the person is first justified and born again by the Holy Spirit. For the tree must be there sooner than the fruit, as Christ also says, Matth. 12, 33: "Either plant a good tree, and the fruit will be good", as if he wanted to say: One strives in vain for the fruit, if there is not first a good tree. For the Pharisees had almost the same character and pretension that we see today in the adversaries, who boast of good works with a full mouth, and are altogether evil. But how is it possible that something good should grow out of an evil seed? Therefore, those who wear caps, fast, pray, watch, have nevertheless retained the old godlessness of heart. For as Horace says, those who travel across the sea change the sky, but not the heart; so they change their clothes, their way of life, their occupations, but their heart remains the same. In right theology, one first deals with the fact that man becomes good through the rebirth of the spirit. This spirit is a certain, holy and courageous one, after which it follows that, as from a good tree, good fruit also grows forth.

Therefore, David has so far kept silent about his works and only asked for what God should accomplish through His word and His spirit; but after he has obtained this, he also comes to his works, which are to follow in the rebirth. These works are not, as the godless papacy has claimed, that one takes upon oneself vows to perform pilgrimages, to go into a monastery (this work they have performed a second time to the highest dishonor of Christ).

(The first thing they did was to give thanks to God, who is so kind and merciful, and to praise his gifts, and thereby also to instruct other people in the same grace, as those do in the Gospel whom Christ has made well. For even though Christ resisted them, they could not refrain from preaching his benefits, praising him, and calling others to the same hope.

These are the noblest works, which testify that the tree is changed from a barren to a fruitful one, from a barren one to one that is full of sap and blossom. To this life Christ calls the disciple [Matt. 8:22], saying, "Let the dead bury their dead, but thou followest me." For he indicates that other works are works of the dead, but those who live in Christ must deal with it, that they may recognize and praise God's mercy, so that others may also learn to recognize it. This, therefore, is the summa that our life and salvation are entirely in the mercy of God, which God reveals through the Word in such a way that He commands sinners to hope in it for Christ's sake. This knowledge is righteousness, as Isaiah [Cap. 53, 11.] says: "And his knowledge shall make many righteous." Here no other work is on our side than that we do not reject the offered mercy, but receive it in faith. But this also is a gift of the Holy Spirit, because faith is not everyone's thing [2 Thess. 3:2]. After justification, when the promise of forgiveness of sins and eternal life is already believed and possessed by faith, the next and ongoing work is to thank God and preach these benefits. But because the world opposes this with all its might, and also the devil does not cease to dissuade us from this preaching by inflicting all kinds of adversities, David asks in the previous verse for the courageous spirit that despises all dangers and bears witness to Christ with great courage, as Lucas (Apost. 4, 8] says of the apostles.

Because this spirit is given to me, he says, therefore "I will teach the transgressors your ways". But how, dear David, if they teach you

do not want to hear? If then the devil and the world persecute you? Why do you promise such a high and difficult work, to teach the transgressors the ways of the Lord? Where are the saints? Do you want to teach them too? Indeed. For if you attach to those whom he here calls "transgressors" their glittering appearance and the prestige in which they walk before the world, you will say that they are not only thieves, not only adulterers and murderers, but even the wisest and holiest before the world, kings, princes, priests, monks, in all the wisdom and holiness which the human spirit can understand and accomplish without the Holy Spirit. For the whole emphasis is on the pronoun "your". For he confesses that those whom he calls "transgressors" have ways in which they walk, and are beautifully pleased in the same. But they are not, he says, the ways of the Lord, they are human ways in which they cannot be saved. Therefore I will teach them your ways. Here again he indicates the danger that awaits these teachers. For the world does not want their ways to be condemned as error, but defends them as righteous] Ways and righteousness. Therefore, whoever wants to be a monk of God, and not of the pope, and to take upon himself the hardest rule in life, and to make his sacrifice to God, let him do so by teaching the transgressors God's ways. Then it will happen that he will not only challenge the devil with hell and the world with the saints against him, but will also often raise objections against himself, and learn by experience what truly good works are, as also Christ says [Luc. 8, 15.]: "He will bring forth fruit in patience."

In this way, do not explain "the transgressors" from those who are evil in the sight of the world, but those who are the holy of holies in the sight of the world, as the Levites were in the time of David, the prophets and the priests. To accuse these of sin and call them transgressors, notwithstanding that they kept the law of Moses, is exceedingly dangerous. There is therefore an emphasis on each and every word that David was in a real purgatory, that is, oppressed by the pains of sin and the wrath of God. Nnn but.

Since he is justified by trust in mercy, he goes out into the public to teach everyone in general about the inexpressible mercy of God, and at the same time to punish all good works and all holiness that are in the world, so that they may hope in the mercy of God alone, and firmly hold that this trust alone is the right path to salvation, but that everything outside of this trust is the path to death and eternal damnation.

This doctrine never goes off without tremendous troubles, because neither the devil nor the world can suffer it. For the world cannot suffer its thing to be condemned, but the devil envies this bliss to men, that they may be blessed by the right doctrine. Therefore, hatred, persecution, slander, and abuse are brought up on all sides in order to suppress this teaching and these teachers, as I also had to learn this very finely through my own experience. In the beginning, even wicked people allowed minor abuses to be punished, which could not be denied in the church. For the trade in indulgences, which was so shameful, was carried on shamelessly, so that there were very few people who did not bear it with the greatest equanimity that indulgences were punished. But when afterwards the punishment extended to other things, which were not so shapeless, and yet ungodly, only then did the whole body of Satan begin to move in such a way that it seemed I could not remain safe anywhere. But this did not happen unexpectedly. For I myself had foreseen this movement, and among others the bishop of Brandenburg, a not evil man, who was well disposed towards us, had predicted that I would bring a lot of trouble upon myself if I also touched the pope. Thus, fear was stirred up inwardly and a fight was waged outwardly. To overcome these dangers, it was indeed necessary to have a joyful or courageous spirit, through which I was strengthened.

But, you may ask: Why does the prophet keep the name "transgressors" and does not rather call them saints, as they are respected before the world? I answer: There are

no saints and righteous people in the world, therefore even the people who have some semblance of holiness are nevertheless called by the Holy Spirit as they are before God, and this very thing serves to strengthen the godly. For these are condemned as heretics because they preach this doctrine of trust from God's mercy. For the enemies of this doctrine claim for themselves the judgment and the name of the Church. Therefore, the Holy Spirit strengthens the godly, so that they will not be frightened by this appearance and the high dignity of the opponents of the Word, but know that the Holy Spirit declares that all who do not have this doctrine, however holy and good they may appear to be, are nevertheless in truth transgressors and sinners.

But he adds, "That sinners may turn to thee." Here the other cause is indicated why this work is godly and delicious in the eyes of God. The first cause was that it was exceedingly dangerous, and could not be accomplished unless the hearts were first fortified by the steadfast and strong spirit. The other reason is that this work is also very great in its fruit. Therefore, even though the dangers might deter, the benefits must still drive. For it is impossible that the word of God should be preached without fear, but, though not all are converted, yet there are some who, out of the number of sinners, believe and are saved. For the success of the preaching ministry is not in man's will but in God's, as Solomon says [Prov. 20:12]: "An ear that hears and an eye that sees are both made by the Lord," that is, both happen through God's gift, namely, that there are people who teach rightly and those who follow those who teach rightly. Therefore David says: I will do what I can do, "I will teach the transgressors thy ways, that sinners may be converted," that is, I will teach how sinners must be converted, and I will bring success home to God, for it is certain that some will be converted. Others seem to teach the same thing, teaching good works, confession, penance, and their own atonements, but these are human ways that stem from the

Spirit of the devil, by which one goes further from your ways day by day. But I will teach as I know that I have come to you, that is, that having known my sin, that is, that my whole nature was corrupted by sin, I have thrown myself upon your mercy, and have not been faithless against the preaching of joy. This is the way and this is the way sinners turn to you; this way I will teach. He that cometh, let him come; he that cometh not, let him do it at his peril 2c.

Therefore, he secretly indicates here that he wants to teach the same thing that he experienced above in his own person; that he does not want to teach sinners, like the pope, who gives advice to do enough with works, or like the Jews, who taught their sacrifices and statutes, but that he wants to teach the whole human race that all human activity is condemnable before God, if it is done with the opinion that one thereby obtains righteousness, according to the saying, Rom. 3:10, 12: "There is no one who is good, not even one; there is no one who does good." By this preaching reason is killed and all human presumption. For since no one can deny sin, what more frightening can be said than that man has no help in himself against sin? After the wrath of God is preached in this way, and man is slaughtered as a sacrifice to God, then follows the sermon of joy: "You will not die" [2 Sam. 12, 13]. For God will not be angry with sinners who are thus sacrificed, but will make them blessed, for He sent His Son to take away the sin of the world. This is the right doctrine and worship by which sinners are converted. Others, who advise a sinner who confesses his unchastity or fornication that he must hurt his body and go to a monastery where he will live chastely, do nothing but lead him who converts from one idol, Venus, to another idol, the abomination, and plunge him into double damnation. That is to say, to pass from Scylla to Charybdis, to run out of the rain into the sea, since after one sin has been cast out,

seven others come in, as Christ says about the cast out devil [Luc. 11, 26.].

This is the first sacrifice that David, after he has become righteous, wants to offer to God, that he teaches the people God's ways, that is, that he teaches that one must come to God in such a way that we first recognize and believe that everything that a person does without the Holy Spirit is sin, if it is done with the opinion of attaining righteousness because the person is found guilty, so that in this way the sinner is first destroyed and killed before God; on the other hand, that it is taught that God is so minded that He wants to forgive by grace for the sake of Christ. For such a God is nowhere, who wants to accept the sinner for the sake of the order of the barefooted, or for the sake of pilgrimages, masses, alms, etc., but they invent such a God without the Word. Those who are thus converted are converted to the idol of their heart, but they are not converted to God. For he is the one and true God, who loves the brokenhearted and is pleased with those who fear him and believe in him. Therefore, if you want to be converted, it is necessary that you be terrified or killed, that is, that you have a fearful and trembling conscience. If this has happened in such a way, then comfort must also be received, not from any work you have done, but from the work of God, who sent His Son Jesus Christ into this world for this reason, so that He preached the comfort of mercy to terrified sinners, by grace, for nothing. This is the way to be converted; other ways are wrong ways, and this, says the prophet, shall be my service by which I thank you.

But, you will say, isn't the new life also part of the rebirth? Certainly. But just as there can be no fruit unless the tree is first there, so there can be no good works unless the person is first righteous and good. Therefore eternal life or grace does not come by merit of works, but those who are already righteous and heirs of eternal life through Christ, whose merit they accept by faith, do good works,

not for the purpose of attaining eternal life, for they already have it by right through an alien merit, namely Christ, but so that they may be grateful and obedient to the divine voice, so that through the glory of God the doctrine and the holy life may likewise be promoted. The adversaries do not understand this order of final purposes (*finium*), but reverse it. Therefore, it is necessary that there be people like David who spread this teaching with great courage, not only among those who are outside of grace, but also among those who are in grace. For these receive this teaching with special eagerness, because they feel the terror and recognize their weakness. Although the others, who are outside of grace, follow this teaching for the most part, this preaching does not go off without all fruit. Therefore the Spirit urges, as a most necessary thing, that this doctrine be sown far and wide. But here, too, it must be remembered that just as those whom he calls transgressors and sinners are regarded by the world as the most holy, so this conversion is regarded by the world as a seduction and heresy, as we have learned from our own example. But we are comforted by the judgment of the Holy Spirit, who calls it not a heresy but a conversion.

V. 16. Save me from blood debts, O God, who art my God and Savior, that my tongue may praise your righteousness.

This verse is somewhat obscure, and it also seems to break the order we have adopted, but I hope we shall explain both properly. Now as far as grammar is concerned, *sanguis* denotes an imputation of blood, or the guilt of having shed blood. Some therefore, after the figure of the synecdoche, take the individual case for the general, so that he calls "blood" all sins by which we deserve blood or death, so that David confesses not only the murder of Urias and also his adultery, and asks forgiveness for them, but quite generally all sins. But here one interjects that he had previously asked forgiveness for these things in general and had also obtained pardon. How then can the order exist,

If he now asks anew for what he has already obtained? I answer: He has made an offer to teach the transgressors the way of the Lord. Now it is not only difficult, but also disgraceful, if one wants to teach others and yet has to accept the accusation that one has publicly committed a sin, as it says in the well-known little verse:

Turpe est doctori, cum culpa redarguit ipsum. [It is disgraceful for a teacher to be told: Hans, take yourself by the nose]. 1)

Therefore, just as David previously asked for absolution from all sins before God and obtained it, so he also asks here for absolution from all sins before the Church, so that the Church may know that he is absolved before God, so that the teaching he wants to spread will not be hindered. This is how the sacraments are with us, which we also use so that the whole Church may know that we recognize our sin and believe that it is forgiven for Christ's sake. Therefore, I leave others to their opinion; but I understand this verse of the outward absolution before the Church, that God may take away the blood (*sanguines*), that is, the imputation of it, in such a way that those whose ears and eyes have been angered by the sins of David may no longer be offended by it. For who does not see how disgraceful it is for a teacher to be guilty of adultery and murder?

Therefore he prays: O Lord, free me from the guilt which the priests can reproach me with. I have sinned against you, even against Moses or your law; now you have forgiven my sin and filled my mind and heart with confidence in your mercy through the preaching of joy: grant that I also may be delivered before the church, that the course of your word may not be hindered 2c. It seems, however, as if he is speaking, as it were, of his own sin in particular (*privato*), that is, of the murder of Urias and of adultery, and it is certainly possible that he is speaking of his own sin in particular (*privati*) as an example of his own sin.

think. But, as I said above, the individual case stands for the general, and the definite for the indefinite, so that he wants to take away all guilt and imputation by which a preacher could be disgraced before the church, so that the people, to whom the sins committed by the teachers are known, no longer resent them, but are even strengthened by them, as Paul mentions in 1 Tim. 1, 13 that he had been a blasphemer and persecutor of the church. The fact that he remembers this not only does not offend his listeners, but only confirms and comforts them even more. After they know that God has forgiven him for these sins, they themselves are also stimulated to the same hope of forgiveness of sins, as Paul says in 1 Tim. 1, 16] that God wanted to present this to the church as an example of divine mercy.

In this way it does not disgrace me before the Church, nor does it affect the credibility of my teaching, that I confess that I was also among the *monsters* (*monstra*) of the Pope, because I became a monk, and both by my masses and by my entire monastic life not only denied Christ, my Savior, but also crucified him anew. For I have lived so completely in confidence in my works and righteousness that I believe that if someone had taught then what I now teach and believe by God's grace, I would have torn him apart with my teeth. But that the Lord has delivered me from these blasphemies and made me a faithful preacher of the Word and of His righteousness is exceedingly sweet to hear in the sight of the Church. In this way David also asks to be saved from the blood debt, that is, to be absolved from the debt also before the church, so that as he is absolved from God, so he is also absolved from the law, and can freely lift up his face before the church, as I have already said of my example that I crucified Christ both in my religious life and before my religious life. This confession of sin does not have the effect that the word is despised, but it increases the confidence in mercy in the listeners.

1) Cf. St. Louis edition, vol. VII, 590, § M.

and is also pleasing to Christ. Therefore, the prophet adds:

"That my tongue may praise thy righteousness." But it belongs to the preaching of the word, as if he wanted to say: If I shall thus be acquitted before the world, and be justified before thee and men, then shall I be able to boast with my tongue, that is, to proclaim and praise with joy thy righteousness, that is, the grace wherewith thou forgivest sins and hast mercy. This word "righteousness" has caused me a great deal of distress. For in general it has been explained that justice is the truth according to which God condemns or judges those who have deserved evil, as they have deserved it, and justice is opposed to mercy, by which believers are saved. This explanation is very dangerous, moreover, that it is void, because it arouses a secret hatred against God and His justice. For who can love him who wants to deal with sinners according to justice? Therefore, be mindful that the righteousness of God is that by which we are made righteous, or the gift of the forgiveness of sins. This righteousness in God is a pleasant one, for it makes God not a righteous judge, but a forgiving Father who wants to use His righteousness, not to judge sinners, but to make them righteous and absolve them. This righteousness of yours, he says, not the righteousness of men or of Moses, I will preach with joy and gladness, even if I should make enemies of all men because of it, if only you do this, that you absolve me also before the church, so that I can appear publicly without shame, without blushing because of my sins, which are also known to the church. But it is a glorious example for the comfort of those who are in the ministry of the word, and yet are not blameless with regard to their past deeds. For I have said that here, too, an individual case, instead of a general one, is set forth as a general doctrine.

V. 17. Open my lips, O Lord, that my mouth may declare your glory.

In the case of the *horae canonicae*, it is perhaps ordered with good intention that the congregation should use them

should begin with this verse. For, as far as the public confession and praise of God in the church is concerned, this is rightly used; but in private prayers this entry is all the less necessary, because there is no danger of tyrants, and the prophet here is not dealing with a private conversation of the sinner with God, but is dealing with the whole church, with the preaching ministry and the church servants and the whole people of God. For with those who have already been justified, there is nothing left to do but to say with David [Ps. 116:10], "I believe, therefore I speak," likewise [Ps. 66:5], "Come and see the works of God," likewise [Ps. 22:23], "I will preach your name to no brothers." The prophet indicates the same here, that after being made righteous in the sight of God through mercy, he has been made righteous by grace in vain, and has received it through faith; Likewise, after he has been absolved from guilt before the Church in such a way that his past sins are no longer an offense, but serve to comfort the Church, he now asks that the Lord open his lips so that he may freely praise the mercy of God in public without fear, not in a corner, as the swarming spirits are wont to do.

But because he asks the Lord to open his lips, he shows how difficult the sacrifice of thanksgiving is, which he demands from us in the 50th Psalm, v. 14. For it is a boldness above all boldness, a virtue above all virtue and a bravery above all bravery, if someone dares to speak publicly of the name of the Lord and to give thanks to him. For here the devil threatens with every kind of reenactment to hinder this thanksgiving. If it were possible for human eyes to see all of these persecutions, then the reason why the prophet asked before to be strengthened by the Spirit, and now wishes that the lips of the Lord Himself be opened to him, would easily be seen, not to pray for the *horae canonicae*, but to bring the name of the Lord before the devil, the world, the kings, the princes, and all flesh. For here are various motives that close the lips: sometimes the fear of danger, until-

often the advice of friends interferes, by which the devil tries to prevent this sacrifice of gratitude, as I have often experienced; and yet God has stood by me in great matters, where the honor of God was in danger, and opened my mouth against these obstacles.

So he teaches here about the public confession and praise of him who has already been made righteous, so that we may learn how great it is to dare to speak what we have experienced. For not only the devil, but also the tyranny of princes and kings, yes, even our sins and our flesh want to prevent this confession; on the other hand, the Spirit presses in, as Peter says, Apost. 4:20: "We cannot refrain from speaking what we have seen and heard." This spirit brings with many groans this prayer before God that he himself would open our lips to proclaim his glory. And here I remind you that as often as these words occur in the holy Scriptures: "To proclaim God's glory, God's righteousness," you may be mindful of the fact that this also indicates the extreme danger, because to proclaim God's glory is nothing other than to oppose the devil, the world, the flesh and all misfortune. For how can one praise God if one does not first declare the whole world with all its righteousness guilty and condemn it? But anyone who does this not only incurs hatred, but also puts himself in obvious danger, just as those who teach monastic life (*ordines*), invocation of the saints, merits, brotherhoods and the like do not praise God, but themselves; therefore they are easily tolerated and approved by the world. Therefore the prophet says: "Lord, open my lips and grant that I may confidently proclaim aloud, teach and instruct others in what I have learned, that you alone are to be praised and glorified for all eternity, since by grace you justify the ungodly for nothing. 2c.

And here you hear who he is that is made righteous, and what works he chiefly performs: not fasting, not abstaining from certain foods, not the hard clothing of John, not the life in the wilderness 2c.; this is also something, but if you compare it with this highest work, with the praising of the name of the Lord, it is a game and a joke, not only with the larvae of the pope, but also with the truly holy people. For John was not so great for this reason, because he clothed himself with skins 2c., did not drink wine nor strong drink, but because he was full of the Holy Spirit, and dared to call the Pharisees "brood of vipers" [Matth. 3, 7.], because he dared to say to the tyrant [Matth. 14, 4. It is not right for you to have your brother's wife", because he dared to testify about Christ in front of all the people among his despisers [Joh. 1, 30. 27.]: "After me comes a man who was before me, that I am not worthy to untie his laces." This is what praises John and makes him the greatest among all those born of women [Matth. 11, 11.]. The life in the wilderness, the hard clothing, the food, the drink can also be imitated by any wicked man, and that without danger, but the office of teaching no one will administer without danger, and it is truly in the day what reward John received for it, since he is so shamefully killed according to the will of the harlot [Matth. 14, 8. ff.]. Whoever, therefore, wants to adorn a great work that is good for a Christian man with due praise, let him not praise the foolishness of the pope, not the special exercises and the hard life of the saints, but let him praise that when the name of the Lord is proclaimed before the world. For this is a virtue above all virtues and the highest and most difficult work.

In the secular regime one sees how few are the people who can go to the government with great courage and despise their own danger, and mostly what happens is what Cicero says, that those who enter the government with the hope of the richest reward cannot be without fear of the most severe tortures; and in the

1) Instead of *votuit* in the editions, *votunt* should be read. After that we have translated.

That the examples of Themistocles, Cicero, Demosthenes and other men who occupied high positions in the state sufficiently testify that this position is also full of dangers. For it is womanly to sit in the corner and reprove the actions of others; but to move about in the council and in the meetings of princes and to speak one's mind freely is something that very few dare to do, even though it would be highly necessary and useful. How much greater and more sublime do you think it is to speak of holy things and teach them in the presence of God and the angels, against the will not only of princes and kings, but also of the devil and the whole world? Here one exposes oneself to greater danger than in the worldly regime, even though great courage is needed there as well. But here one also needs the spirit of God and the finger of God, through which the lips must be opened and the tongue (*os*) loosened for the praise of God. Therefore, after the attainment of righteousness and grace, there is no greater work than speaking the truth about Christ. For not only can men perform bodily exercises, but also animals can be afflicted with fasting and other things, and it is said that the Turks lead a very strict life in bodily exercises (*afflictionibus*). But of course also among the Christel: the exercises should be made, which serve to keep the flesh in check or to kill. But that one should dare to put oneself in danger of life and goods for the sake of the name of Christ, for this the joyful spirit is required and this prayer: "Lord, open my lips." Now he adds the reason why, having been made righteous, he can do nothing, nor knows how to do anything, but give thanks through the praise of God's name, and says:

V.18. For you have no desire for sacrifice, otherwise I would give it to you, and burnt offerings are not pleasing to you.

This is the reason why he wants to proclaim the glory of God, "because", he says, "you do not desire to opser". But is this

Is it not a heretical word that he says, at the time when the law still existed and the whole service of God: "You have no desire for sacrifice, and burnt offerings are not pleasing to you"? I, at least, have often wondered at this boldness of the prophets, that they spoke so contemptuously about sacrifices, against the law of Moses and the custom of their people. If now the pope could prove his holy things and ceremonies in such a way by the word of God, as the Jews prove their sacrifices, then I would certainly not have dared to let something be said against it. But now that he has instituted and commanded these things without the Word, indeed against the Word, we condemn him with full right. But how much less is our victory, which we have won over the Pabst's church and the ceremonies, than that which the prophets gained by putting down the sacrifices of the law in this way. For here the priests did not lack Scripture, as did the pope. For the pope has nothing except the empty title of the church with which he could protect himself and his statutes, but these knew that the sacrifices in the law were commanded by God.

Therefore, David seems to be speaking against the scripture and Moses, who has the obvious testimony that he should provide the people with ceremonies according to the will of God. For it is known with how much diligence everything in the second, third and fourth books of Moses is commanded that belonged to the tabernacle and the divine services; the examples of the patriarchs are known, of Abraham, Isaac 2c., all of whom testified to their gratitude to God through sacrifices. That he therefore speaks against the explicit commandment of God and against the examples of all saints par excellence: "You have no desire for sacrifice", has the appearance of an outright heresy. But first, before this is further explained, this is to be remembered: If the Holy Spirit in David rejects the sacrifices that God Himself commanded: how then can the monks with brazen foreheads presume to boast of their caps and orders, their vows and plates as holiness? How dare the popes, with impudent mouth, attach any righteousness to their statutes, since all these things are instituted without the word of GOD? Therefore you shall surely

1) Erlanger: anAustiul. instead of: anAustius.

that this verse from the Holy Spirit is not only spoken against the law, but also against the entire papacy with all its statutes, sanctities and services, namely that they are not pleasing in the sight of God.

That David now addresses a very special individual case, and rejects the highest worship, which God Himself instituted, thereby makes an obvious distinction between all religions in the world, even the one instituted by Moses and commanded by God [and the Christian one], and separates from all these religions this one, which is through faith in Christ, through which sins are forgiven and righteousness is bestowed with eternal life, without works and without merit, only for the sake of it, because God is merciful and forgives through Christ. This religion teaches that works and services should not be performed in such a way that God is propitiated by them; sin cannot be atoned for by sacrifice, fasting, obedience, either in worldly government or in the home, nor by any other human work. In themselves, they are holy and good works, which are also pleasing to God, but if they are done for a purpose other than that commanded by God, then God is not only not reconciled, but even offended. For if the burnt offerings are not pleasing to Him, how great a folly it is for us to rely on the things that we ourselves have chosen without the word of God! That is why he says in the 50th Psalm, v. 9. f. 12: "I will not take from your house bullocks, for all the beasts of the forest are mine, and the ground and all that is therein," as if he wanted to say: In vain do you think that I am reconciled by your works, for even your soul, your senses and your whole life you have by my gift. Therefore, if I needed what you have or can do, I would not give it to you. For from where does a monk get that, that he fasts, that he prays, that he does other things that he wants? Certainly from the fact that I have given him the will and the ability to do other things.

1) Original edition and Wittenberger: eas instead of: ea.

2) to do this. Now, if I give this, why do you give it back to me as if I needed it and demanded it? Therefore, there is nothing left for us to do to God but to thank him. For all that we are, live and have is God's gift, as it is also said in the Letter to the Romans [Cap. 11, 35.], "Who gave him anything before?" Therefore, when we do all that we can, we do nothing other than return what we have received; but what special thing do we do with it?

Here the work saints answer: We want to earn something and testify the free will. This means, however, to give back to God what is his, as if it were not his, but actually what is ours. But reason also punishes this ungodliness and foolishness, that he does nothing special who is not generous with his own good, but with others'. This is what we should have done, that we should give God his honor by recognizing that we possess everything we have or are able to possess through his good deeds, that it is he who strengthens us with his spirit, who opens our mouths and fills them with his praise 2c.

Therefore, this passage not only serves to comfort and instruct us, but also to refute the adversaries. For if we use this saying of Paul to prove that righteousness comes from faith, that "a man is justified without works of the law" [Rom. 3:28]. If we use this saying of Paul's to prove that righteousness comes from faith, "man is justified without works of the law" [Rom. 3:28], they subtly twist it in such a way that ceremonial works are to be understood and not moral works (moralia), as Sadoletus also does in the Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, in which he twists Paul's meaning back and forth in such a way that he not only nowhere attains Paul's opinion, but also does not remain the same himself everywhere. In this way, the opponents of our doctrine show that they are completely ignorant of the Scriptures and do not even understand the children's matters, what ceremonial laws are or what ceremonial works are. For they interpret Paul thus: "We are justified without works of the law," that is, without ceremonies, because the ceremonies have been done away with, that is, without ceremonies.

2) Erlanger: 6at instead of: äo.

Nothing else can follow from this than that also at the time of Moses those ceremonies had been done and that it had been free to be circumcised or not, to sacrifice or not, because they did not make righteous also at the time of Moses, as this passage testifies. But who 1) is so patient that he could suffer this to be said by a theologian? For if these ceremonial things are not necessary for righteousness now, because they are done, what will we say when we return to David's time, when they were not yet done, but were counted among the highest and holiest works and were necessary? Did they make you righteous in those days? Not at all, for this is certain: "You have no desire for sacrifice."

Furthermore, ceremonial things are not rightly diminished. For although the commandment of the Sabbath is one that concerns a ceremony, it is nevertheless in the first table, before and above all moral works. Therefore, it is a cavillatio, which is repugnant to a theologian, indeed, to any learned man, to say that when Paul speaks of the works of the law, he speaks only of ceremonial things, as of works which are on a lower level than the moral ones. Look at those Old Testament times, and you will find that ceremonies were not only necessary, but also held the highest dignity. For though ceremonial things are now either free or abjured, yet under the law they were not free, but necessary; and yet it was true then also, "Man is justified without works of the law." Therefore Paul speaks of the whole law, that is, of ceremonial as well as moral works, that righteousness is not given by them, but that righteousness is only the taking of mercy. This mercy does not impute sins, but forgives the sins of those who believe in Christ. Paul defends this opinion in the letter to the Romans; those who do not believe in the same

If they pay more attention than to the main part of this whole business, they cannot even see a shadow of Paul's right understanding.

At this point, David indicates that this is also his opinion, since before the time of the New Testament, at the time when the sacrifices and the Temple were at their peak, he says in explicit words that the sacrifices are nothing, because God does not make anything of them. For this means to abolish the entire legal service of God, even though it was commanded and instituted by God and had to be performed. For the dignity of the ceremonies need not be diminished, since we see that they are not only approved by God's command and word, but also ordained and commanded; and yet David says, "You have no breath for it." Likewise Isa. 1:11: "I am full of the burnt offering of rams, and of the fat of the fatlings." Likewise in the preceding Psalm [Ps. 50:8], "Because of thy sacrifice I punish thee not." 2c. Such sermons were no doubt condemned by the priests as heretical, and the prophets killed for their sake.

But the reason why the prophets condemned the sacrifices, which were the highest services of God in the law, in this way must also be indicated. For there seems to be a peculiar difficulty in the prophets' condemning that which was commanded by the voice of God. But such sermons of the prophets must not be understood as if the sacrifices and ceremonies were rejected par excellence, for the prophets have in mind mainly the opinion with which the ceremonies were performed by the wicked. For the purpose of the sacrifices or the legal services was not that by them they should be justified and please God. That purpose, since the sin of Adam, has been reserved for the one sacrifice of Christ, whose shadow, as it were, were the sacrifices of the law. For besides the fact that God willed that by this service of sacrifices His people should be distinguished from all other peoples, and that the people should testify to His obedience, the sacrifices were also emblems of Christ's future sacrifice, through

1) In the Wittenberg: Hui ram patien" est;
 Erlanger: tampatisns est; Jenaer:
 Huis bara pattens est; we have followed the latter reading.

which the people were to be reminded of their future redemption.

Now the greater part of the Jews, since the priests had thus perverted them, performed the sacrifices with the opinion that they thereby obtained the forgiveness of sins. But this was as much as if they made the blood of oxen equal to the blood of Christ, and an animal sacrifice equal to the sacrifice of the Son of God. It was because of this impiety, which was confirmed by the impious opinions of the legal sacrifices, that the prophets preached so earnestly against the sacrifices, not as to the matter itself (*formalem causam*), but as to the final purpose (*finalem causam*). For the sacrifices were mostly done in the place that GOD had appointed for them and according to GOD's commandment, so that nothing could be blamed as far as the thing itself (*formam*) was concerned, but the final purpose was diabolical. Thus we reject the masses of our adversaries not because it should be evil *per se* to use the Lord's Supper, for we too use it with all reverence, but because they attach to it the ungodly delusion that it is enough if only the work is done (*de opere operato*), that it is applied to the living and the dead 2c. Thus, in baptism we do not ascribe anything to the mere performance of the work (*operi operato*), but say that faith is necessary, through which grace must be received, which is offered in baptism. But just as David had his adversaries who opposed him because of this doctrine, so also we must suffer slander, hatred, banishment, and other things for the sake of this doctrine.

In this doctrine, then, our theology must remain firm and constant, according to which we teach that in the article of justification, when it is a matter of the reformation of consciences and the redemption of sin, neither ceremonial nor moral things apply, because they are not ordered for the purpose of obtaining righteousness through them, as Paul says generally [Gal. 3:21]: "The law was not given to make alive, so righteousness cannot come from the law." Here, however, only the mercy applies, which GOD has shown in

The mercy shown to the sacrifice of Christ, and the faith by which this mercy or sacrifice of Christ is grasped. Now both our ceremonies and formerly those of the law are holy and very good, but only in their circle; moral works are also very valid, but only in their circle: but for this purpose, to make righteous, they are not only useless, but also nothing at all. For this end belongs only to the sacrifice of Christ, in comparison with whose dignity all the ceremonies of the law, all moral works, are nothing.

Thus, worldly righteousness in its circle is something exceedingly lovely and very good, so that peace and the social intercourse of men with one another may endure; but if, because you are a good citizen, a chaste husband, an honest merchant, you also want to be righteous before God, then you make an abomination out of the exceedingly lovely thing, which God cannot stand. Therefore, we should firmly believe that we are righteous by mercy alone, and that we remain heirs of eternal life; then we should testify to our obedience by living a holy and blameless life, which is not for our righteousness, but for the thanksgiving and obedience that we owe to our God, like children in the house of the Father. Then it will happen that, just as the sacrifices under the law of God were a sweet savor, because of the trust in his mercy, by which the person was first justified, so also our obedience and our holy works will be pleasing because of faith in Christ, since they remain in their own circle, because they are not done to obtain righteousness, but for a testimony that we are pleasing and justified by grace. For a tree must first be good before anything good can grow out of it, as he says afterwards with great emphasis [v. 21.], "Then the sacrifices of righteousness will be pleasing to you," namely, when the walls of Jerusalem have been built in this way beforehand. Samuel also says to Saul [1 Sam. 10:6, 7], "The Spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee, and thou shalt be another man: then do that which is in thy hand."

comes." Here he does not impose any single work on him, but sends the one who has been changed by the spirit, as it were, into a forest of works; for because he has now become a different man, other works also follow.

Our opponents do not understand this theology, but turn the matter around, wanting and teaching that one should do works until one is changed and becomes a different person. But the man or person must first be changed in the way prescribed by the order of this psalm, and then it will happen that everything will be done right, whether you are circumcised, or sacrifice, or perform ablutions according to the law, or be without the law in the works of your profession, whether you eat, or drink, or become married 2c. For all things are well-pleasing, because the person is already well-pleasing, not for his own sake, but for the sake of Christ's sacrifice and the mercy that comes to him in faith. Therefore one must be careful about the reason why David rejects the sacrifices, namely, for the sake of the article of justification, or for the sake of the final purpose (*causam finalem*). For this not only corrupts the ceremonial, but also the moral works, if it is not the right one. Hence the subtle distortions of those who are unlearned in spiritual things, that they interpret the works of the law in Paul as being ceremonies. For the ceremonies were just as holy and necessary under the law as the moral works are holy and necessary in the New Testament, as the third commandment about the Sabbath clearly proves, since, although it concerns a ceremony, it is placed before all moral ones. For as we are obliged today to keep the imperial laws and those concerning domestic affairs, likewise also the law of brotherly love, so were 1) those obliged to keep the ceremonies. For it is nothing to say that ceremonial things are now dead and done. For at that time they were not dead, and yet they did not make us righteous, as moral things do not make us righteous.

I had to remind them of these things for the sake of the slander with which even learned people try to suppress us. I had to remember these things for the sake of the slanders with which even learned people try to suppress us. Now I return to the consolation.

It is therefore extremely comforting that God does not take pleasure in sacrifices, but rejects and repudiates this supreme service of God, if it is done for the purpose of averting the wrath of God and making us righteous. Therefore, the mercy of God is praised to us here, who forgives our sins for nothing and makes us righteous. For those who seek their righteousness by their own works do nothing but strive to become their own makers or creators, contrary to the Scripture [Ps. 100:3], "He made us, and not we ourselves." For the first creation, that we are born into the world, is not ours, but God's, and now should even our second creation be ours, by which we are born into eternal life? Therefore, it is not only a false opinion, but also an ungodly one, if one thinks that God can be reconciled through our works in such a way that He gives us eternal life or righteousness. For if He does not even want the works He has commanded to be done for this purpose, but rejects them, how much less will He accept self-chosen works that a foolish superstition undertakes without God's command?

Therefore, we must remember this saying, by which he says against Moses, against the law, against all works and worship, "You have no desire for sacrifice," so that the righteousness that is through faith in Christ may be established. But this saying does not seem to contradict both the law and our hearts. For by nature we are all such that we wish we could offer something to God by which he might be propitiated, and we cannot with quite sure heart trust ourselves wholly to mercy. Therefore, when we have done evil, despair is felt, and when we have done good, presumption always secretly stirs. But why are we presumptuous about the things we have done elsewhere?

1) Instead of *odliAanlur*, *odliZabantur* should probably be read.

and which are not really ours? For even confession and thanksgiving are gifts that we have received from elsewhere; how much more are the gifts for which we give thanks! It is in vain, therefore, to attempt reconciliation by works. For what else should the Lord receive with favor, since he himself does not delight in sacrifices?

V. 19. The sacrifice that pleases God is a troubled spirit; a troubled and bruised heart you, God, will not despise.

This passage is worth writing with golden letters. For here you see what kind of sacrifice he sets up against the sacrifices of the law and the whole world. Since the sacrifice is not made without a priest, he also rejects the priesthood of the law and establishes a new priesthood with new sacrifices. To begin with, let us make the distinction that there are two priesthoods, one which he rejects and the other which he approves. The priesthood which he rejects is that which has burnt offerings and other sacrifices ordained in the law; but the priesthood which he approves is that in which not animals, but troubled and bruised hearts are sacrificed. Let us first take heed of this division, and believe that it was not made by David, but by the Holy Spirit Himself. For it will be revealed later that no other comfort can be given that is greater than this, that you know that God Himself says this, that He has no need of the blood of oxen, nor of other works that are ours, as it is said [Matt. 15:9], "In vain do they serve Me with the commandments of men"; but that the divine sacrifices that please God are a troubled spirit and a broken heart.

Secondly, not only is this distinction between the priesthood and the sacrifices, which is unbearable to the Jews, taught here, but we are also presented with such a lovely and friendly description of God that one can hardly find a lovelier one anywhere. According to human thoughts (speculative), God is described by several parables, that God is the center, which is everywhere, and the circle (sphaera), which is nowhere. But

These are mathematical and physical things, which we leave to other teachers. For we seek a theological description; this is not a description of the divine essence (essentiae), which is incomprehensible, but of his will and his disposition, what is pleasing to him and what is not. For not he knows a prince who knows his power and his wealth, but he who knows the mind and all the counsels of the prince. Thus the creation of the world and the power of God are before your eyes. But this is the main thing, to know for what purpose and with what intention God has made these things. This knowledge is presented to us in the present Psalm with special sweetness, namely that God is such a God who in his final purpose (finaliter) deals with nothing else than that he looks upon and loves the brokenhearted, the afflicted, the anguished, and that he is a God of the humble and the anguished. Whoever could grasp this description with his heart would be a theologian. For God cannot be grasped in His majesty and power. Therefore, this description makes known to us the will of God, that God is not a God of death, but of life, not of destruction, but of blessedness, not an enemy of the lowly and lost, but their lover and helper, and in short, that He is a God of life, of blessedness, of rest, of peace and of all comfort and joy.

Therefore, the prophet comforts all the brokenhearted that no other sacrifice can be offered to God that is more pleasing to Him than that we be terrified and afraid, and in this fear firmly hold that God is favorable to us and reconciled 2c. This is a wisdom above all wisdom, that is, a divine wisdom, because human feeling or reason enters this: I feel that I have sinned, and therefore I am grieved in heart, therefore GOD is angry with me, therefore all grace is denied me. Such things enter reason, and everything that is not Christ. Then comes Satan, who drives the heart, which is already inclined to despair by itself, only deeper into it, either by holding up examples of anger to it, or by holding up such sayings, with which

Christ and the Holy Spirit want to humble the secure hearts. Through this, the evil becomes greater, and the despair, as it were, receives new strength. But what does the wisdom of the Holy Spirit teach us? It tells us that God is not the kind of God who wants to frighten the frightened even more and break the brokenhearted even more, but that He is a lover of the brokenhearted, the afflicted and the miserable, who pays attention and listens to the groaning and the voice of those who are burdened with misfortune. But if the Holy Spirit does not pour this wisdom into hearts, even if it is heard, it is still heard without fruit. For hearts cannot grasp this spiritual wisdom, but when oppressed by bitterness and sadness, they dare not even pray. For though I have no great experience of this trouble, yet I have learned once or twice how hard it is to speak in this struggle: Lord, help me; because the hearts, when they feel God's wrath, neither see nor know anything with which they can comfort or uplift themselves, so completely are they taken over by despair.

Therefore, I exhort and remind you, who will one day be teachers of the church, that when hearts are in extreme despair, you teach them in such a way that they may rise up and dare to hope, because it is written here that the hearts that are thus crushed and humbled are the most pleasing sacrifice to God, which he prefers to all services of God. He expects this service from all, and in order that this service be rendered to him, he sends pestilence, famine, the sword and all dangers, so that we, when we are thus beaten, may hope for God's help. For he smites that he may repent; but we receive the smiting in such a way that we turn away from him and flee from him. He smites so that we should say, "A sacrifice pleasing to GOD is a fearful spirit"; but we either run, as under the pope, to monasteries, or seek other ways in which to heal ourselves. This is what Isaias says [Cap. 9, 13.], "The people return not unto him that smote them." This is what reason, which does not have the Word and the Spirit, is wont to do in all cases.

flee, as Peter did in the ship [Luc. 5:8], who called Christ to go out, because he himself could not go out; but if he had been close to the shore, he would undoubtedly have jumped into the sea. But as the Spirit teaches here that a bruised heart is a [pleasing] sacrifice to God, so Christ teaches there that Peter should not be afraid [v. 10].

It is therefore an exceedingly clear saying, which shows that our theology does not belong to the hardened and secure. These are completely without understanding, and see and understand nothing of such spiritual things. Such people are those who pursue this doctrine so persistently, both teachers and authorities and princes; but this theology serves only to comfort the afflicted, the miserable and the despairing. These languish and lie low, for they have broken and bruised hearts. That is why they admit the physician, Christ, who teaches that this is not a sickness unto death, but that God is the most acceptable sacrifice. This is the medicine that removes those unspeakable pains, and there is no other remedy. But because the world and our adversaries do not understand this, they ridicule it as foolishness. But for the Holy Spirit it is not foolishness, but the highest wisdom, that in the time of despair we should hope most for mercy, and in the time of presumption and security we should fear most. The prophet prefers this service to sacrifices, and also invites us by his teaching that if we want to offer the most pleasing sacrifice to God, we should not slaughter hundreds of oxen (*hecatombae*), not offer burnt offerings, but sing this little song: "The sacrifices that please God are a fearful spirit," that is, that we believe that God is pleased with our plagues and tribulations, and that we should trust in His mercy.

"A troubled and bruised heart you, GOD, will not despise." He says, "A troubled and bruised heart," a heart which is not made small in a fictitious way, but in truth, which is as it were dying of despair. Such a heart, he says, you do not hate, as we dream, but take it

with pleasure. We see, therefore, that our theology is a word of life and righteousness, because it fights and aligns against sin and death, nor can it be seen in efficacy except in sin and weakness. It is also a word of joy whose power cannot be seen except in tribulation and visitation. But we are such people that, while we desire to have the word of life and joy, we also desire that the temptations of death and sorrow should not be there; truly, fine and lovely theologians! Therefore, we must learn that the Christian must live in the midst of death, under the biting and trembling of conscience, in the midst of the teeth of the devil and hell, and yet hold fast the word of grace, so that in such trembling we may speak: You, O Lord, will me well, for it is written that God has no other sacrifice more pleasing to Him than a troubled heart, nor a dearer priesthood than that by which the brokenhearted are offered to Him. If the priest sacrifices with a splendor that is befitting for kings, he is impious in the eyes of God and an abomination compared to a sinner who says, "God, be merciful to me," like the tax collector Luc. 18:13; this one is a right priest and a right priest and pleasing to God. For he offers the most pleasing sacrifice to God, a heart that is troubled and yet hopes for His mercy.

Therefore, this description of God is exceedingly comforting, or the declaration (definitio) that God, according to His very essence (forma), is such a God who loves the afflicted, who has mercy on the brokenhearted, who forgives the fallen and refreshes the mats. Can a more lovely image of God be created? Since God is in truth like this, we have as much of Him as we believe. Then this verse rejects all other worship and all works, and calls us to trust in the mercy and goodness of God alone, to believe that God is favorable to us, even when it seems to us that we are forsaken and in misfortune. In this way, as Nathan reproached David

When David heard [2 Sam. 12:7], "You are the man, the child of death," he humbled himself and made the sacrifice. Then when he heard [v. 13], "You will not die," he completed the sacrifice. For in the midst of anger he grasped the hope of mercy, and in the midst of feeling death the hope of life. From this experience came this verse, by which we are taught about the sacrifice pleasing to God, which consists in hoping for life and mercy in death and under the wrath of God. This theology must be learned by experience; without experience it cannot be understood that the spiritually poor should know that they are then in grace when they feel the wrath of GOD the most, that both in despair the hope of mercy and in safety the fear of GOD should be kept, as it is said in another passage [Ps. 147, 11.]: "The LORD is pleased with those who fear Him, who hope in His goodness." For according to this verse, GOD is pronounced (definite) nothing but grace and favor, but only against the brokenhearted and afflicted 2c.

But this saying must also be treated in a negative way. Because it is a pleasing sacrifice to God when we hope for mercy, distressed and crushed, he forbids despair as the greatest ungodliness. For he wants one to endure affliction in faith, but he does not want one to add despair. For it is a sin as great as another to be presumptuous because of one's own righteousness, and to despair because of one's own unworthiness. One must keep the middle road, otherwise the highest abomination is made of the most pleasant sacrifice. The sacrifice should remain a sacrifice and not become a ruin; but it is a ruin when one despairs. Therefore, we should each bear our crosses and tribulations in such a way that we are not oppressed by sadness and fall into despair. For this is to rob GOD of the divinity which he most displays in his mercy, as the description of this verse also proves. This is said daily and

but when it is to be exercised, very few do so, but like cowardly men of war, we generally abandon the flags at the first sense of challenge. But we should have stood firm, trusting in mercy, even when it seems to us that we are overwhelmed by tribulations, and should have made the sacrifice which the Holy Spirit praises us so much. For there is a place here even for the weak, only they do not have to leave their post altogether. For no one is a master in this art, but we all remain pupils, as Paul also says [Phil. 3, 12.]: "Not that I have already grasped it, or am already perfect, but I am pursuing it" 2c.

V. 20. Do good to Zion according to your grace; build the walls of Jerusalem.

So far we have heard how throughout the Psalm the article of justification and repentance, with the fruits that follow, has been treated quite abundantly, and in the most powerful sayings, both in affirmative form (affirmativis) and negative. The affirmative form is: "Create in me, God, a pure heart"; because he demands a new creation, he clearly leaves nothing for free will. The negating form is, "For you have no desire for sacrifice," for he indicates that by no works that are ours can we attain to propitiate the wrath of GOD and obtain mercy, but must stand by par excellence that GOD is merciful 2c. Now the prophet stops the teaching, and adds a prayer, as if to say: I have hitherto shown how to become righteous, which is the right way of repentance and forgiveness of sins; now nothing remains but that we pray that this knowledge be spread among the whole people and come into practice. For there will be no lack of false teachers who preach the law and their sacrifices in such a way that this part of the doctrine of the mercy of God, by grace in vain, is completely neglected. Therefore, prayer is necessary so that the right doctrine may prevail among the people against such people. For it is not necessary to think that he is concerned about the temporary

Please, for Jerusalem was then in prosperity, and well provided both with laws and very good rulers, and yet David desires that the walls of Jerusalem be built, not by such builders as handle earthly things (materiam), as wood, stones and lime, but by the Lord. The walls were standing, and yet he prays that they may be built. Thus, although he points to Jerusalem, which is already standing, he still speaks of the spiritual Jerusalem, or he uses a synecdoche, and while he names the city, he understands the people or the congregation in the city and in the whole kingdom, so that, just as the city is sufficiently fortified with walls against the attack of the enemy, so it will also be fortified in the spirit against the power of the devil and spiritual persecutions. For there will be no lack of spiritual destroyers who urge people to do good according to the Ten Commandments, but teach them nothing about trusting in mercy. Thus they are led to trust in their own righteousness. Against these, he says, build thou up, that they may know and understand thee aright, that is, that they may know that we are righteous by thy grace and mercy alone 2c.

That is, to build the walls so that they are solid, when in this way people learn to trust in mercy and accept grace. For those who have once begun increase daily more and more. For it is not enough to begin in this knowledge, but because the devil, after grace is accepted, rages against the godly with all his servants whom he has among angels and men, therefore it is necessary. Therefore, it is necessary to stand in the battle line, and it is also necessary that the hearts be strengthened and fortified more and more, so that, just as Satan does not cease to attack, so also he who protects Israel does not cease to defend and fortify. So this verse contains a request for the bestowal and preservation of grace. But here, too, he attributes everything to the goodness of God, not to his merits or efforts, namely that God, according to His good will, will preserve this knowledge of grace,

that he also builds the walls, that is, that the hearts are strong and well fortified in this knowledge, so that they can stand against the devil in the time of battle. But when the people are thus instructed, made righteous, preserved and defended against all errors and persecutions of the devil,

V. 21. Then the sacrifices of righteousness, the burnt offerings and whole sacrifices, will be pleasing to you; then they will offer bullocks on your altar.

That is, then we will praise the sacrifices that we condemned before, and they will be pleasing to you. For one can rightly understand in general the sacrifices, both those that happened according to the law and spiritual sacrifices; both are "sacrifices of righteousness", because the whole emphasis is that it is God's goodness and God's benevolence. For when men thus trust in his mercy, it pleases GOD when an ox is sacrificed, and it is a sacrifice of righteousness; but when there is a lack of an ox, "the farrows of the lips" please him, as Hosea [Cap. 14, 3.] calls it. Hence I understand the sacrifices in general. But they are called "sacrifices of righteousness," not because they make righteous, since the person is already righteous beforehand by faith or mercy, but because they are done by the justified or the righteous, or by righteousness itself. For if the people are righteous, and recognize that they please God by grace alone, not by any worthiness or merit of their own, then everything they do according to the word of God is rightly called either a sacrifice or a work of righteousness, even those bodily things. As when such a person drinks wine, he drinks wine of righteousness; when he puts on a skirt, he puts on a skirt of righteousness; when he governs his servants, he governs a servant of righteousness; when he wages war, when he exercises the temporal regiment; when he lives, when he dies, he does all these things of righteousness, because the person is righteous. In this way, understand the altar, whether it be the one that was in the temple in Jerusalem at that time, or the spiritual temple that extends over the whole world today.

So the prophet holds a twofold sacrifice before us. The first is what he called a broken heart, namely, when a troubled spirit is felt and a humbled heart wrestling with thoughts of God's wrath and judgment. Now see to it that you do not add despair, but trust and believe in hope, since there is nothing to hope for. For Christ is a physician of the brokenhearted, who will raise up the fallen, and will not quench the smoldering wick, but will preserve it. Therefore, if you are a wick, do not extinguish yourself, that is, do not add despair to it. If you are a crushed reed, do not crush yourself even more, or give yourself to the devil to be crushed, but give yourself to Christ, who loves people and loves those who are crushed and distressed. This is the first and noblest sacrifice. Afterwards, when you thus recognize that it is God who justifies sinners, and sing to God even one song of thanksgiving (*Deo gratias*), then you also bring the other sacrifice, namely the sacrifice of repayment or thanksgiving for the gift received. This sacrifice is not a merit, but a confession and testimony of the grace that your God has given you out of pure mercy. Therefore, the burnt offerings under the law, which the holy and righteous people offered, were not offered for the purpose of making them righteous, but that they might bear witness that they had received mercy and consolation. Thus a sacrificed ox is a witness of mercy, or, that I may say so, a voice speaking by works (*operaria vox*) of gratitude, or a gratitude given with the hands (*manualis*), by which the hand exercises gratitude as it were by words consisting of works (*realibus*).

This is the second kind of sacrifice. For the first sacrifice is a sacrifice of death, so that we may neither rise in prosperity nor despair in adversity, but by the fear of God keep security in check, and in feeling the wrath and judgment of God hold fast the hope of mercy, lest we either strike our heads against heaven or our feet against the earth. The other kind of sacrifice

is thanksgiving. This consists not only in words that we confess our faith and praise the name of the Lord, but in all actions that occur in life. But it is called a sacrifice of righteousness, because it is a pleasing sacrifice, because the person is righteous, and because it is preceded by that sacrifice of humiliation and being crushed, which keeps the middle between presumption and despair. But it is not a mathematical means (medium), but a physical one. For it is impossible to live in this weakness of ours in such a way that we do not bump anywhere, either to the right or to the left; but the effort is required that when we feel either certainty or despair, we do not yield to it, but resist it. For just as a target is set before the archers, so a place is given to those who do not miss the mark altogether, even though they do not hit the center or the mathematical point: so God is that enough for us to

struggle with the certainty and hope of the spirit, and likewise with despair. If there is a lack of joy in tribulation, or of fear in prosperity, it is not imputed to the saints. For they have the mediator Christ, through whom it happens that they are considered truly saints, even if they hardly have the firstfruits of holiness. For through Christ they become tithes, which in themselves are no more than firstfruits.

So the sum of this whole teaching is that the afflicted should be lifted up by the merit of Christ or by the mercy of God, and that those who are without affliction should walk in the fear of God and cast out security. For this teaching, the prayer that concludes this psalm is necessary, that the Lord will build His church; then pleasant sacrifices pleasing to God will follow. May God and our Savior Jesus Christ graciously grant this to us all. Amen.

18. sermon on the 65th Psalm,

at Dessau before the Princes of Anhalt.*)

Held in July 1534, issued 1534.

The 65th Psalm,

By D. Mart. Luth. at Dessau before the princes of Anhalt in 1534.

Preface.

Because there is now a time when it is necessary to call upon God and pray, especially for a gracious weather and fruitful year, let us take before us the 65th Psalm,

made for this purpose, which is to stimulate and admonish us, first, that we also learn from where we should take such goods, and who is the man who gives them, and after that, that we may the more

*) In July 1534 Luther, accompanied by Bugenhagen and Cruciger, was visiting the princes of Anhalt in Dessau (Köstlin, Martin Luther, Vol. II, p. 295). On this occasion he preached this sermon on the 65th Psalm, which Cruciger published in the same year under the title: "Der I.XV. Psalm, durch D. Mart. Luth. at Dessau, preached for the Prince of Anhalt. I. 5. 3. 4." On the first page of the last leaf all alone: "Printed at Wittenberg by Georgen Rhaw." In the collections: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. III, p. 394; in the Jena (1556), vol. VI, p. 122; in the Altenburg, vol. VI, p. 166; in the Leipzig, vol. VI, p. 241; and in the Erlangen, vol. 39, p. 137. According to the latter we reproduce the text, since the original is printed there.

to pray more earnestly, and to cry out with earnestness in all troubles that may come upon us. For our sin and ingratitude is also so great that we have to be concerned, if we cannot help it, and improve our lives, so that we do not only have to

but with many greater punishments. Therefore, with the holy prophet David, let us also sing this little psalm to God, in which he praises and thanks God for all the goods he has been given, and also asks that he keep them and always give them.

The 65th Psalm.

[1. A Psalm of David, to be sung to song].

2 God, you are praised in the silence of Zion, and vows are paid to you.

3. you hear prayer, therefore all flesh comes to you.

4. our iniquity is hard upon us; you will forgive our sin.

Blessed is he whom thou choosest, whom thou dost admit to dwell in thy courts: he hath abundant comfort from thy house, the 1) holy temple.

6 Hear us according to the marvelous righteousness, O God, our salvation, who art the confidence of all on earth, and far off by the sea.

007 He that strengtheneth the mountains with his might, and is armed with power.

8. who stills the roar of the sea, the roar of its waves, and the raging of the nations,

009 That they that dwell in the same ends may be astonished at thy signs. Thou makest glad the weavers, both of the morning and of the evening.

010 Thou hast visited the land, and watered it, and made it very rich. The fountain of God hath abundance of water; thou hast made her corn prosperous; for so thou buildest the land.

(11) Thou waterest his furrows, and wettest his plowed ground; with rain thou makest it soft, and sowest his growth.

12. you crown the year with your goods, and your footsteps drip with fat.

013 The dwellings also of the wilderness are fat, that they drip; and the hills round about are merry.

014 The fields are full of sheep, and the meadows are thick with corn; they shout and sing.

1) Erlanger: "dem"; so also afterwards in the interpretation. The old editions have like our Bible: yours.

In order that we may grasp this psalm more recently and more easily, let us divide it into three parts. For there are also three different regimes on earth, ordered and established by God. The first is called his heavenly kingdom, that is, his divine word and service, since he rules over consciences and souls through preaching, baptism and sacrament, and is properly called and ought to be called the Christian or divine regiment, since he himself is lord and prince, and we are his courtiers, all of us who have been baptized and called to hear his word, or called to the ministry of baptizing, preaching, comforting, exhorting 2c. This is the highest and most noble, so he leads from the beginning to the end of the world, and all power is in it. For he hath so given up the other reigns, that yet he will not leave his own.

The other (which this psalm calls "hills" and "mountains") is kingdoms and principalities, lands and people, or commonwealths, which we call the worldly regiment, or worldly rule and authority.

004 The third is the last and lowest government, where every man is given his wife, and his child, and his house, and his farm, to rule them, and to keep the food, and to build the land. For the others cannot wait for the same, who are in the preaching office, nor those who are to rule and counsel. Therefore the third estate must also be there (namely, the common man), who build the land and work, so that they and others can feed themselves.

(5) These three are all touched upon in this psalm one after another. And although it is especially made to thank and pray to God for

The lowest [regiment], 1) namely, for good weather and gracious time, is nevertheless the way of the prophets, where they speak of the same benefit and gifts of God, that they also attract the others, especially the high grace. So also here, since he has undertaken to praise and thank for the domestic regiment or agriculture (as one wants to call it), he continues and reaches out, and also leads a praise and thanksgiving for the other two regiments.

Now it happens with all three, that each of them has its devil, by which it is hindered or corrupted. The first one has it with its red spirits and heretics, who falsify and corrupt the doctrine, and take or pervert the sacraments, thus destroying God's kingdom. There is a daily war in Christendom, which has always stood and will stand until the last day. For the devil never ceases to challenge the same, to reverse or destroy it. Therefore it has 2) its offices, which it must always do. First, to preach and to know the right doctrine. Secondly, to uphold and defend it against the devil and his servants who cling to him. Where therefore this kingdom is to be preserved, one must pray for it; but where it stands, one must give thanks for it. In the Lord's Prayer we pray daily for this [Matth. 6, 9. 10. Luc. 11, 2.]: "Hallowed be your name, your kingdom come" 2c. Where it comes to pass that it stands thus and is pure, then one may sing this psalm, and many others (which speak of it in particular), to praise and thanksgiving to God, who has given it and must also preserve it.

7. the other now also has its devil, who causes destruction in the world, as namely, murder, war, riots 2c., since God removes the hand when he wants to punish, and decrees that princes and lords fall over each other, destroy and devastate land and people.

(8) Likewise, the third must also have its devil, where wicked masters and wives, or disobedient and unfaithful children and servants are in the house; item, all kinds of misfortune and damage to fruits, livestock and other things, thereby the

food is corrupted. In order that both of these things may happen properly, it is necessary to pray that God will protect and preserve against the devil, and where it is right to do so, to thank and praise Him.

(9) Now, if we were pious, and each one lived rightly in his position, there would be no doubt that we would have a gracious God, and the devil would not gain much. As if we preachers were faithful and diligent, God would well protect us from heresy and error. Likewise, if princes and lords were faithful to their regiments, mutiny, war, rebellion and other misfortunes would cease. Likewise, if every house and servants were pious and did what they should, God would also graciously continue to give blessings and prosperity.

(10) But because we are not pious, we must also suffer as a punishment that the devil roars and causes misfortune everywhere. Because we do not respect God's word, nor are we grateful for it, he has to teach us (through the spirits of the wicked, who deceive the world and plague it with false doctrine) what treasure it is and where we got it from. So must he teach lords and rulers and the disobedient subjects, when he sends war, murder, fire and dissension into the land, that they may know for what and whence they pray, and to whom they should give thanks for such good. Likewise, he must sometimes send us a plague or harm at home, and leave a little room for the devil to punish us, lest he lose his divinity, but teach us that he is God who gives us such things, and wants to be known and honored for it, that we do not live, as if we had it of ourselves and were not allowed to be anything, as we will also hear in this psalm that he primarily complains about our sin, so that we deserve that he shows his hand and punishes us, and first prays that God will first of all take it away from us and be merciful, so that the punishment will also be averted. And he begins it in the best and finest way with thanksgiving, so that he may give God his glory and a loving, pleasant sacrifice, and teach us to recognize from whom we have all kinds of goods, and how we should thank him for them.

1) Erlanger: "the lowest".

2) In the Wittenberg and the Jena instead of: "it" the explanatory words: "this first realm".

V. 2. God, you are praised in the silence of Zion, and vows are paid to you.

(11) O how fine and praiseworthy God art thou (he will say), who givest and maintainest all the three kinds of government in the world (as he will tell it properly hereafter); therefore we also owe thee praise and thanksgiving. And this happens "in the silence of Zion", or Jerusalem, where the spiritual government is going on and is God's service. For at that time there was no other place or place where one should worship God, but he had bound the hearts of all men who wanted to meet and worship the right God to this place, so that, even though they could not be there in body, they would have to turn and look there with their hearts and call only on the God who dwelt there, knowing and knowing no other God.

12 Thus it was in the days before Christ. But now this Zion has become so great and wide that it fills heaven and earth. For Zion, with its temple and worship and all its people, is now broken and destroyed, but God has built a much greater and more glorious one in Christ. Where He is with His Word and Sacrament, there is also the true Zion. Therefore, whoever now believes in this Christ and confesses, praises or adores Him, praises and thanks the right God in the right Zion or Jerusalem. But he adds this little word, in silentio, "in silence. For this also belongs to a Christian who wants to pray and praise, that he may be a little patient and suffer, and not curse or murmur, or become unwilling to God, if it does not happen and go as soon as he likes; but it is said, as the 4th Psalm, v. 5, says: "If you are angry, do not sin; speak with your heart on your couch, and be silent," or be quiet. Item, Isa. 30, 15: In silentio et spe erit fortitudo vestra, "if you were silent and hoped, you would be helped," that is, to learn to praise God and give thanks, even though He is not there as soon as we would like, but to be accustomed to His ways and to be patient, even if He consumes something. For this is yet a small thing, that we praise and give thanks, because He gives what we desire, and leaves

We may do as we please, but praise and thanksgiving must be done in such a way that we remain still and steadfast, and wait patiently for his help. For he is such a God, who does not leave him to decide the person, time and place, what, when or how he should give, so that we may learn to know him rightly and believe that he knows better how he should do it, so that it will be of use and good to us than we do ourselves.

(14) See, this is why it is called "Praising God in Silence," that is, not to become impatient, but to learn to forgive and to wait, and always to persevere in faith. For we see what people are like when they fall into impatience, how they rage and rumble, and give a terrible account of themselves; they must be called quiet (that is, patient). For with such impatience they hinder themselves, that they cannot pray nor praise. But again, where one praises him in silence, or with patience, that one waits for him a little while, and suffers, this he likes, and pleases him as his dearest sacrifice and worship (as he will now say). As when we pray for Christendom against the heretics and seducers, that his kingdom may come, and the mobs and troubles cease; item, for a good temporal government and peace in the land, or for our house and farm, cattle and grain, 2c., and yet we are consumed, and let it be seen as if it would not get better. We must not let this hinder us, nor stop us, but always praise and glorify that we have a gracious God, who hears our prayer (as he says soon after), and will not remain outside. As we certainly hope that some of us will experience that the present mobs and troubles will perish, even if it can be seen much differently now; and indeed we have already experienced that he has often and wonderfully helped us in many and great troubles, when it could also be seen badly, and we had to be quiet and wait.

(15) But what does it mean that he says, "Vows are paid to you"? Just as he has now said, "You are praised" 2c. For nothing can be given to God, nor can anything be done, unless vows are paid to him, namely, those that he wants from us, and has himself ordained and decreed. (For he does not want any of these, which we ourselves make to him, or which we undertake to serve him without his word). Now

we all vowed to have him for a God according to his commandment, saying, "I am the LORD your God" 2c. Me you shall serve, and no other 2c. So we vow in baptism that we will honor, praise, celebrate and worship the Lord Christ, and no other. I cannot pay such vows in any other way than by saying to him with my heart and mouth, "I thank you, my Lord Christ, and praise and extol you before the world, that you are the one who is gracious to me and helps me. For so I received it in baptism, that thou shouldest be my Lord and God, and none other. See, that means recently, the right vow paid, and the right service done, which he wants us to do, of which more is often said elsewhere. This is the first verse, that one should praise and thank him. Now, for what shall one give thanks and praise, or what is the child called? For this (he says),

V. 3. You hear prayers, therefore all flesh comes to you.

16. Everyone who wants to pray and give thanks should come to you, for there is no other God on earth. Where "to thee"? or, where is he found? In former times in Jerusalem, or in Zion (as he said), but now nowhere, except in the Lord Christ, in whom he has presented himself to all the world in all places, that one (excluding all other gods and services) should come here alone. Why is that? Because you alone are such a God, who gladly lets himself be asked, and also gladly hears. That is his right price, therefore he is to be praised, and thus one should get to know him from this psalm, and certainly believe that he likes to hear prayers and also wants to hear.

(17) What then will we lack if he does not give us what we desire and need? Certainly not from him, but [it] will certainly be our fault that we are too lazy and lazy to pray. For he will not lie to you, because he says that he is the God who loves to hear prayers; not only one or some (as the great saints), but all men on earth. For he says: "All flesh comes to you", that is, all that may be called a man. If then thou art flesh and blood, thou art also herein called and required, and standest

in this verse as well as I, and I as well as you, and is lured and whistled to you and me as well as to this or that saint. For he is not the God of the Jews or of the priests alone (as if they alone could pray), but my God and the God of us all, who are called flesh or man. For I am baptized in his name and believe in the same God as all the others; therefore he will hear my prayer as gladly as the others.

(18) Therefore it must surely be lacking in us, that we do not do such things, which he would like to have, and of which he bears the name, and wants to be so praised and glorified, that he gladly hears prayers, and also gladly wants to give what is asked. But that [it] does not happen, no one does, but we ourselves, who do not want to do him the service, that we only pray confidently, and do not pay attention that he would like it so much, and would even like to hear and give as much as we may demand it. But because we do not pray, he cannot give us either; so the devil himself comes upon us, afflicting and hindering us in every way. This is the first defect and harm, so that we hinder ourselves from throwing away prayer, when we could bring all misfortune from us, if we only pray confidently on his word and promise in the right Zion, that is, in faith in Christ, who promises us that whatever we ask in his name, we shall receive [John 16:24]. Now the other defect is that which he himself indicates in the following verse, saying:

V. 4 Our iniquity oppresses us; you will forgive our sin.

(19) This is the stone that lies on the heart of almost everyone, that we cannot pray. O I would gladly pray (we say), if I knew that my prayer would be acceptable to him; I will let others pray who are more pious and more skillful than I am. For I am a poor sinful man, but where there is sin, prayer is not valid [John 9:31], for God is angry with them and does not hear them. By such thoughts the devil beats down prayer and disturbs it, so that nothing comes of it, even though someone would like to pray.

wanted to pray. Now it is true that sin is there, and it is not a small piece, because he himself displays it and confesses that it cheaply frightens and drives back. For he also feels the heavy stone (which is called our sin) that lies there and presses, so that the heart cannot rise. For who can lift up his heart and eyes against God, if he knows that he has angered him and deserves all the plagues? So it happens that no one prays at all, everyone relies on someone else, and thinks: I cannot pray now, I will let those pray who are pious, and wait until I also become pious, and so neither I, nor you, nor others pray. Where will you finally find someone who prays?

20 Now, how shall we advise him? We cannot resist; it is written there, and it is true, we are all sinners in the first place, and our sin presses us hard. But if you know no counsel, listen to what this verse teaches you when you feel such anguish that your heart says, "Oh, you are not able to pray now, do you not feel your sin, how you have angered God? 2c. If such things occur to you and hinder prayer, do as you hear here and see the prophet speak and do. "Our sin oppresses us" (he says). This is true; but if I should not pray for it, and should not begin to pray until I felt myself without sin, I would never come to it, and the devil would put a lock upon me, that I could never open my mouth. Nay, not so (saith he), but first see how thou layest aside the same burden. Sayest thou: How? Shall I run to Rome, or to St. James, or repent until I feel sin no more, and become worthy to pray? No, nothing will be done, but only in this way, that you fall badly before God with this distress, and say, as it says here, "Oh, Lord, our sin weighs us down. Even though we know that we should pray, and that you are glad to hear, we cannot do so because of this burden; but because you want to be asked, and call all flesh to come to you, I come with this, and lay down this burden before you, and ask that you will forgive my sin and be merciful to me.

21 Behold, therefore, you have rightly offered prayer to

If you are caught in the greatest need that oppresses you and hinders you or makes you unskilled, so that you cannot pray, and you have removed the heavy stone from your heart, then it will be done properly; otherwise you will never be able to pray properly. For I have also tried it, and it can still happen to me, when I want to begin to pray, that the devil drives me away by such thoughts: Oh, you are not skillful now, I want to wait a while, and meanwhile do something else, until I become more skillful; and so I get further and further away, from one hour to the next, yes, from one day to the next, that I must at last force myself against it, and continue to pray, when I feel most skillful. For it is said that he who is not skillful today will be even more unskillful tomorrow, and that no one is skillful through forgiveness. If you do not learn to pray because you are clumsy and feel your difficulty, you will never learn. For when the sweet thought comes, Now I am skillful, now I will pray aright, 2c., that must be the devil, and make your prayer sinful and shameful. Therefore nothing is better than thus spoken: If I am unskillful, and feel the burden of sin, I will do as the prophet David did, and all the people of God, who were much holier than we, and yet complain of sin. If they did not let it hinder them, then my sin should not hinder me either, but I will run all the more to prayer and present the same need to God above all things.

22. Behold, this is the right golden art, how to become skillful in prayer; not by your own worthiness or devotion, but that you look up to it, since you feel unskillful, and present it to him and say: Lord, because you want me to pray and come to you, I will come and pray enough, and the very thing that hinders me the most and drives me back from you is my sin, which is on my neck and presses me, that you take it from me and forgive it. So you will certainly become more skillful, and soon feel lighter and happier. And only thus always against this burden pushed through and continued,

That you do not let sin cause you to err, nor refuse to pray; but so that you do not think to abide in sins.

(23) For we speak not at all of those who are not oppressed by their sin, nor desire to be rid of it, but still have pleasure and joy in it. For these should not and cannot pray, as those who feel no cause or need for prayer. But of such we speak, who feel that they would gladly pray, and yet are clumsy and weighed down by their sin, and go and devour themselves with it, and may not pray until they are rid of it. This is what the psalm teaches, saying: "Dear one, if you want to be free from sin and pray, just look at this hour now, and take on the same trouble, and you will already be skilled. And since you have laid aside this heaviest burden, and have now laid aside the first thing, continue after this, and pray also for the needs of all the world, that God may also do to others as he has done to you; namely, for the spiritual government, that his name may be hallowed everywhere, and his word preached, and that the people may be grateful for it 2c. Item, that emperors, kings and princes may rule well in their regiments, preventing blood, war and other mischief. And after that also for your house and daily bread. This is what is called rightly and worthily prayed. And it is certainly heard, even if it is not done quickly; for it means to pray and praise "in silence," that is, with patience.

(24) So from this verse you have the right way to begin prayer, both with the confession of our unworthiness and with faith, in which we hold up to God His will and promise that He will have our prayer and gladly answer it. And if we would do this, and not let the devil hinder us, we would do wonders and miracles through prayer; just as it is, praise God, that what good happens now and is preserved, that is preserved through prayer, and where we kept praying with earnestness and diligence, much more and greater things should happen. But now we must repay others who do not pray, and suffer a little with them, because we live with them. The

is now the preface of the psalm, in which he prepared himself for prayer and removed the obstacle. Now he starts from the first, spiritual regiment, and thus goes on from this to the others.

V. 5 Blessed is he whom thou choosest, whom thou dost admit to dwell in thy courts; he hath abundant comfort from thy house, the holy temple.

(25) This is a true Davidic way, which he leads before all other prophets, that he praises first of all God's word and service, and then his kingdom, given to him by God. He is especially diligent in these two things, as he has also made several psalms especially about them. Thus he also indicates here how great it is when God shows honor and grace to someone, that he chooses him and lets him dwell in his holy temple, and there he becomes a partaker of all the good, comfort and sweetness that is in his house or temple. This gift he uses to exalt and praise very highly; as St. Paul also praises everywhere, and considers to be the greatest treasure, to have and to know God's word. For in the sight of the world it is a contemptible thing: it goes madly to it and calls it heresy, or, if it does not condemn it nor persecute it, it leaves it, and does not respect it, but turns its back on it, and waits for its thing, as it does not ask much about God and His kingdom 2c. But this holy prophet holds it out of the measure high and dear, to whom the grace happens, and so good can become, that he may come to his house or church, or also to his churchyard. For he calls all three, "in thy house", "courts", and "thy holy temple".

26 Now at that time (when King David was alive) God had not yet built a house or temple without the tabernacle of Moses, with the ark and the mercy seat, and in no permanent place, though he went about building a magnificent temple and making great supplies for it; but he was refused until the reign of his son Solomon. He still goes forth with true, full, great joy and thankfulness, and calls the place where God dwells a castle, or a temple, or a temple of God.

God's house, and God's court, and yet was a small hut, only twenty cubits long, and ten cubits wide, without windows and always windows, without having an open space around it, a hundred cubits long, and fifty wide, as a churchyard. Still he praises it so well over all goods and grace, where a man is called and chosen, that he may come so near to him in the court and tabernacle. Now it was nothing but wooden boards and knitted carpets, and a churchyard without a wall, drawn from a net. Why then does he praise it so highly above all castles and royal buildings, indeed, above all the world's goods and treasures?

27) Answer: He was a man of God, and full of the Spirit, and knew well that God had appointed the same place especially, that He would speak and be present there, and whoever would come there, that God Himself would hear, and what he prayed there, or was told to him, that should be yes and kept. I would run to that place if I knew of such a place or house (even if it were made of vain leaves or cobwebs), where I would hear (as from God Himself) what I needed for my salvation, and have everything I would ask for, and not consider how small it would always be. How much do you think that there have been, and still are, people who have run all over the world, and would gladly have consumed all their possessions, where they might have found a place where they could hear the comfort that God would be gracious to them and hear their prayers. But it is as they say: They carry onions, they bring back garlic; in their uncertain delusion they run, in the same they come back. But if we knew of such a place, where God would speak to us from heaven and hear our prayer, who would not run there, even to the end of the world, and take no treasure on earth for it?

28 Now there was the tabernacle, and after that the temple of Solomon. For so it was ordained of God by Moses, when he said, Exodus 20:24, "In the place where I will set up the memorial of my name, there will I come unto thee, and bless thee" 2c. That was told them so much: Where this tabernacle

how little it is to be esteemed: nor where it is, there will I be also, and so be that it shall be called with grace, that I may bless you, and do you good; and what ye hear there, that God shall have spoken, and what ye ask, that will I hear, and give unto you 2c. Such a thing would still be worthy to be held holy and high, as a delicious house of God or divine castle and temple, even if it were a straw hut; for the host who is at home there (how small the house is), he pays for it all.

(29) Behold, therefore the prophet so joyfully praises and extols: Praise and thanks be to God that we have a place where God Himself dwells, preaches His word, and declares His will, hears our prayer, and helps us out of all troubles. What more do we want, or what better can we desire? For if we have this, we have a higher treasure than all kings and princes, and will not much inquire whether all the odds are against us, and all the devils do not laugh. Therefore I may justly boast, and say, O happy man! what a blessed man is he that cometh to grace, and is so blessed that he may come to thee where thou dwellest, that is, that he may hear thee or thy word. For such glory and defiance have no other nations, nor so many kings and mighty men of the earth, as to say, With us dwelleth GOD, here is his temple, where he speaketh and is heard; but we alone (says he of his people) are called and chosen to be called GOD's people, and have a GOD dwelling with and among us. This is the glory that none on earth can equal, and it cannot be said how great a thing it is, to have a place where God dwells and speaks, and tells us what to do to him, how to pray and how to call upon him.

030 Now this he glorified, when it was not yet so abundant as it is now in Christ: but we ought first to sing this verse much more joyfully, and to praise it without ceasing, if we had hearts to understand it, and eyes and ears to see and hear it. But the devil does us the mischievousness that we do not see this joy and our treasure, which we have much more gloriously than they had. For now it is no longer

But he has built an outer temple or church, the wall of which goes around the whole world; as St. Paul Col. 1:23 says, "that the gospel may be preached among every creature under heaven"; and Ps. 19:5, "Their rule goes out into all the earth, and their speech to the ends of the world. This means a church that is as wide as heaven and earth. For he now causes his word to pass through all creatures, as he himself commanded the apostles [Marc. 16, 15.] "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Which is no other thing than as if he said, "I will build a church (through the preaching of the gospel) as wide and as large as the whole world, where I will dwell and speak. For where his word or ministry goes, there he dwells in all the world, making himself heard and speaking to us all.

If the holy prophet David had experienced such things, and seen such great honor and grace, I think he would have rejoiced to death, because he can boast that God dwells there in the small, narrow corner, so that one can see how these people can make use of it and need it, which we despise so miserably, who have God's word so abundantly, and such a large church or house of God throughout the whole world. We are still so stubborn and hardened that we neither sing nor praise, nor like to hear about it; indeed, what is worse, most people despise it and rage against it. Shouldn't God strike us with thunder and lightning that we give thanks so badly for such grace and blessing, which we have so abundantly greater and more abundant than they have had?

(32) What shall we say in that day, when they shall come and say, O, if we had had the honor and grace that is done unto you, how would we have sung and shouted as joyfully as ye have felt in our psalms! what have ye done, which have had it in all churches, in all houses, and in all places? One day they will be reddened, and will stand with all shame, and condemn themselves, who have so shamefully despised it, and they will

Go, as Christ says, that Sodoma and Gomorrah will fare much worse than the cities and people who have heard his word and yet despised it. But the world will not let it be told nor advised, go, and despise all that is threatened of God's wrath. But he is not afraid of their wrath either; he lets them confidently despise and mock it, but in the end he will punish them mercilessly, so that they will know what they have despised.

But God protect us and give us the grace to be among the multitude who hold God's word dear. For what more shall he do, the pious God, than to send us home with his dear word, and thereby promise us his grace, both here and there, that he will always be with us, and hear our prayer, forgive our sin, save us from death, and also give us enough on earth, and when we have suffered a little here, then take us eternally to heaven? and shall not earn more with this in the world, than that such glorious preaching and comfort should be most shamefully despised? But let those who despise it be despised, as those who are not worthy to know such grace and treasure. But I (says he, and he who is a true Christian) hold it that whoever may be, since God's church and dwelling place is, that he must be a chosen man, and is called blessed.

(34) Now we have the grace to come to him daily and without ceasing, and to be where he is. But where is he? Nowhere, except where his Word and Sacrament are. But where are they? Nowhere, but everywhere in the world. Therefore, he can be found and come to him everywhere. But the only thing lacking is that we cannot give him the name he gives him, that he dwells there, and that this means to come to him. For we have eyes like the cow when it looks at a new gate. So we also see that the priest baptizes or administers the sacrament, but we are not so wise that we could say, "Here I come to God," as it is truly called coming to him. For who is it that made or instituted baptism and sacrament? Not a man or some creature, but He Himself instituted and commanded them. Therefore, if I am there-

I will surely come to God Himself, who baptizes. But because one sees no more than water and the hand of man, we hang on to our eyes and think no further.

(35) But this holy prophet did not do so, though he saw nothing but the tabernacle covered with skins, and the net drawn round, and the cedars, 1) or the tablets, that he might also say, Ho, what is this? I have seen more such things. But thus he says: There I see God's house or temple, here I come to you 2c. For he beholds with right spiritual eyes God's word and order, who has promised himself there. So when he heard his priests or Levites, he did not look at them (as we do) according to their mouths or noses, nor think it was a human thing, but according to God's word, which they taught, and considered it, where Moses or God's word was read or preached, that there was neither Moses nor Aaron, but God's word, and is also called, coming to God himself, and belonging to God.

(36) But in us is the infirmity (as I have said), that we cannot so regard the word (which we hear or preach), and think that it is not of man, but of God, when it is not of man, but of God's command. Therefore, where it is spoken by a preacher or another man's mouth (even if he were to speak by an ass), it was spoken by God. Therefore the power is in him, that we do not look at it only by the body, that is, by the mouth and nose of man, but do the honor to think where it comes from, or by what order it goes, and why it is called the word of God. So then, everyone may well think that it did not come from or through man, nor was it invented; otherwise, if it were human, others, as Turks and Gentiles, would have it as well as we. But to us it is given, that we have it, and understand it, and put it into our mouths to preach, so that he teaches and preaches through us, and we are no more than his mouth and tongue. Therefore it is to be honored and heard as God Himself.

For he has rich comfort from your house, the holy temple.

(37) O blessed, and blessed, and blessed beyond measure, is he that hath this treasure. For he has a treasure, not of gold nor of silver, but of other, higher goods; and he is rich and full of great possessions. For he hears God speaking to him, the King and Lord of lords, even of angels, and the richest comfort. For he speaks of eternal goods, namely: I am your God, who created you, and I give you everything, and I will give you much more. Send you my Son, who will shed his blood for you and wash you with it, and strengthen and comfort you with my word and spirit, and will not leave you in trouble, but will put my hand to it, and help and protect you. Is this not a richness and fullness of all comfort, when we hear that he speaks to us like this, and does what our heart desires? For this is why he himself speaks to us, otherwise he might well let others speak, as he spoke through Moses, and still speaks through princes, father and mother, when he gives laws and tells us what we should do. But comfort is not there in trouble and sorrow, nor salvation from sins and fear of death and hell, unless it comes to hearing him himself, saying, "Behold, I will protect you and save you, and give you everything, even myself, and you shall be my dear child. Whoever hears this and considers what great good it is and brings with it, may well laugh, sing and jump with joy, and fear nothing, for he has great comfort from God.

38 And there (he speaks again) "from your house, the holy temple". Behold, how useful the prophet can make this little piece for him, that he repeats it over and over again, "from your house, the holy temple. All this is based on the word by which he shows and reveals himself to us. For it is called his house, not so that he leaves it there as it stands and remains high up in heaven, where we cannot come to him, but God's house it is called for this reason, and also that he dwells in it and wants to be found there. Just as it is not called God's word, that he has made it his home up there in the

1) "cedern" is an adjective here. Erlanger: Cedern.

Heaven speak, but that se^{is} in our heart and mouth. For he is and dwelleth with us, speaketh and worketh through us, helping us to believe, pray, and all things. For he does not build his house like a carpenter who builds a house and goes away, but he himself wants to live and stay there, even if there is neither wood nor stone, and everything is open.

39 For in Hebrew a house is not only a roof and walls, but also a householder who keeps house and has a wife, children and servants. Where this is not, there is no house for them. So here, where God is and speaks, there is certainly His house; as the Scriptures clearly testify about the patriarch Jacob, Gen. 28:17, when he was lying in the field at night, and in a dream he saw a ladder reaching from the earth to heaven, and God was speaking to him on top of it 2c., and when he awoke he said, "What shall I say? After all, here is GOD's Hans." Item: "This must be a holy place, for surely God dwells here, and is the gate of heaven." Where did this come from? It was nothing but an open field, and had neither wall nor walls. But because God spoke to him there, he said, "God dwells here.

40 So we should also learn to say, where one hears his word or preaching, that this is called God's house, and he himself actually dwells and speaks there. Item, where baptism is, that he himself baptizes 2c. For he is not (as [§ 38] said) such a master who builds a house, and then goes away and leaves it standing, but does it all for the purpose that he himself may be there, create and rule. Therefore he calls it not only "his house", but also "his temple", that is, his castle or royal house (as afterward King Solomon built a temple, as a glorious, royal palace), which is called "a holy temple", in which he leads his spiritual regiment and does holy things. So he also has his royal castle and palace with us, where the preaching chair and baptism is. For this we should also give thanks with the prophet, that he draws so near to us that we hear him daily, and are with him in his temple and palace, where we hear vain rich consolations.

(41) Now to build special houses and churches is not commanded, but it is good for the simple who are denied.

The goal is to bring them to a place where they can hear and learn the Word of God and practice the sacraments together, as well as to have a special ministry and people to do this, even though every Christian can do it himself and has it with him.

V. 6. Hear us according to your marvelous righteousness, O God, our salvation, who art the confidence of all on earth, and far off by the sea.

It is not enough that God has established and appointed his kingdom, but it must also be added that he upholds and defends it. Just as in a worldly kingdom it is not enough to set up a regiment, but it is also necessary that he uphold it. Item, as he must not only give husband and wife to sit at home and do what belongs to housekeeping, but also strength and power to maintain it, so that they may remain in it; Because I have said that every government has its devil, who would gladly hinder and destroy it, the spiritual with the spirits of the wicked, the secular with war and disobedience, the domestic with unfaithfulness and all kinds of misfortune, so that it must be he in all ranks who must nourish and defend, give and defend both.

43) So it goes here in the spiritual regime: where God's word goes out that he builds his church, the devil is quickly there and builds his chapel next to it. For he cannot have rest. Because God has a place on earth, he seeks to destroy it. We may take care of that, and have nothing else to comfort us. For therefore also God is called in the Scriptures a LORD of hosts, as one that lieth in the field for ever. For the devil also lies in the field against him, and cannot bear that a Christian should be on earth. Therefore he works and sends false spirits among his preachers and Christians to destroy his kingdom, both with doctrine and life, so that it remains true that he always has a chapel where God has his church. Therefore he asks here for thanksgiving, because he has brought us to his dwelling place, where we hear him, that he may also keep us there.

44. but he asks that God hears and upholds "in righteousness" 2c. For this is the warfare in this spiritual realm, that one may

and fights how to become righteous or how to remain pious; everything is to be done for righteousness, then the dispute arises, how we can become pious and blessed before him. For he teaches that we are righteous before God through Christ alone, by grace alone, freely given [Eph. 2:8,9]. His church also speaks and believes this way. And blessed are those who hear and keep these things! Against this the other group contends, who set righteousness on our doings and merits, and make their clamor against us, that with this doctrine we hinder and prevent good works, and make the people slothful 2c. This is the strife; who will resist or separate? For the devil hath possessed them, that they will not be instructed, crying and raging against us without ceasing.

45 Therefore, says he, because the world strives against our doctrine and word, which is preached in thy temple, and condemns and persecutes us for it, thou mayest do the best. Hear us, who are called to thy holy habitation, when we hear the word; and do thou also the other power, that we also may be protected thereby. For though I have been baptized and taught of my Lord Christ, that I may know where I am to abide, yet may I have strength and protection to abide; so strong is the devil, together with the world, that he could snatch me away. Therefore the prayer must always go, that he who has given us that we should come to this, may also add to it his power and strength, and keep us in it to the end. That is why he calls him "God of our salvation," that is, the God who must help us and give us victory. For "God of salvation" means as much as God of our victory, or who gives the victory, namely against the enemies of his kingdom or his righteousness.

46. and calls the righteousness preached in his temple "a strange righteousness," that is, not such righteousness as the world understands and praises, but such as the whole world is offended at. For this is a ridiculous thing in the sight of all reason, especially of those who want to be holy, that we should be righteous and be called righteous only through another, when we do nothing at all. Oh how the heathen mocked when they first heard that the Christians were such men, who

praising such a God who was born of a virgin and then crucified and died, 2c., and accepting and worshipping such a public executioner on the gallows, believing that they would become righteous just because he died, and that this would be enough for their sin, and they would not have to do anything else.

(47) This has always been, and still is, a strange, even an annoying sermon, and may well be called a strange or terrible righteousness, at which all the world is annoyed and afraid. For they cannot judge otherwise according to their wisdom, but thus: How can this be called righteousness, since we do nothing, and people are therefore pious, that they believe in another, who died on the cross like a cursed and damned man? If this is true, let us live as we wish, and do what we desire, for what good works may we do? Behold, this is what the wicked boys teach (they say), thereby destroying the church and worship, and tearing asunder the regiments and all that is fine and good. Where is left here what our fathers and Moses, yes, God Himself commanded? Shall all this perish and be nothing? Only dead, dead, with the wicked and damned teachers!

(48) I know this well, he says, and confess it, that it is a strange righteousness, and so strange that you alone must maintain it. For as it is not of our own devising, nor grown out of human understanding, but rather is contrary to it, so it is not ours to maintain it. For when these righteousnesses teach me that we are to be saved and blessed without our merit, through Christ alone, and yet after that we are also to do good works, they go against their righteousness, Mosiah's or their works, which is according to reason; on this they stand so stubborn and gnarled that what is said or sung to them is not acceptable to them, and is to them a strange, unruly thing. Therefore you must preserve it (you who are our salvation and victor), and it is in your hands alone to carry it out, as it was in the beginning when we learned how to believe and live.

49. Now this is a warning for us Christians

and consolation, 1) that we are not surprised if great, excellent people become hostile to this teaching, condemn pope and bishops, trample princes and lords underfoot. For it is too strange for them that they cannot accept it. For they are drowned in such thoughts as they have conceived from the teaching of the law: God wants one to be pious and to do good; item, God loves the pious and is hostile to sinners 2c. This is in them, and is right, but not rightly understood; but, as they have taken it from the words, they stand on it as hard as iron, not knowing how God makes pious, or what he means by pious, namely, not because I do or merit by myself; otherwise I thirst for nothing everywhere from Christ, and his death would be in vain, and there would be no difference between Turks and Christians, but who are as diligent to do good works as we are.

50 Now the gospel teaches us that we cannot do anything by our works to obtain God's grace and be justified before Him, but must come to the Lord Christ (through the word preached to us) with this faith: "You are the one who redeems me from sins, from death and the power of the devil, and earns me grace and everything with God. This is the right doctrine or righteousness before God. But they do not hear it, and it remains a strange righteousness, not only to them (for they do not consider it a righteousness, but call it a damned doctrine and life), but also to us (who accept it), that He alone must preserve it, and give the victory to stay with it. As also Ps. 118:22 says: "The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this is from the Lord, and is marvelous in our eyes" 2c. For the builders are the noblest and best of the people, who lead and govern them; but they must reject this stone.

51 But what does God do to it? He goes to it, and from the stone rejected by the high-minded and high-born, He makes a precious cornerstone, yes, a church, which all the world

fills. This also means a strange building and strange righteousness. But it is therefore so portrayed to us, that we know that it must and should be so, and do not wonder whether great and high people are hostile to the doctrine or are offended by it; but rather miracle is in the eyes of Christians, as the same Psalm [Ps. 118:23] says, that a sensible, wise, learned man comes to it, and is so enlightened that he may accept it; otherwise, according to reason, it would be right and just that all the world should be offended by it and run against it. Therefore, one must pray here (as both the same [118th] Psalm and this one do) that God Himself will help and give happiness, that this righteousness will retain the victory, and that God's church may remain against the devil's chapel.

Thou art the confidence of all on earth, and afar off by the sea.

(52) Though the world long boasts of this thing, and rejects and condemns this doctrine or righteousness, yet nothing is established; there is no confidence on earth, but thou. Run 'so wett the world is, to the end, to all seas, yet it is you alone on whom human heart's comfort can stand and abide. Let all the gods, saints, and scholars, with all their might and power, come together, teach, preach, and comfort as they will and can, yet they cannot make glad any heart, nor give counsel nor comfort to any conscience, but you alone do it by this teaching or word heard in your temple.

(53) And hereby he secretly moves that the church or Christianity (in which the doctrine of the right consolation, or of this confidence and faith in him, is preached) should go as far as the world is, even if it is persecuted in the world. For he clearly says that there is no other comfort or confidence without Him alone, in all the world and among all the people of the earth, who also have gods and worship, but they are and can do nothing at all; but if they are to have right confidence and comfort, it must be you (he says). There is only one light in all the world, and only one God who can comfort, that is you, whom we have and preach; he must remain in the end, and keep the victory, as he has remained until now.

1) Erlanger: "gebet"; Wittenberger and Jenaer: "geben".

54. So then he described the first spiritual kingdom of Christ, that it is such a government, where he himself dwells and speaks, and has to do with righteousness and truth, that is, that both the doctrine (how to become godly before God) and also the life go right and are preserved in his temple, against the devil's chapels, that is, against all sorts of slanders and aversions that strive against the right doctrine. Thus the right image of Christianity is painted, that it stands in the hearing and believing of the Word, through which He forgives sin, hears prayer and comforts; But so that one must suffer it to be called heresy, and to condemn the Christians, and yet be preserved in it by its power, and is called a strange kingdom or righteousness, which, as glorious and great a consolation as it is, is so terrible and horrible to behold that everyone shrinks from it; so that we may know that it must be so, and learn that he alone is the victor and savior here. What follows now all belongs to the other two regiments, which we want to pass over recently.

V. 7: He establishes the mountains with his power, and he is armed with might.

(55) This is the worldly government also expressed in its words, and it is the way of the Scriptures that they call kingdoms or regiments mountains, as it is said in the prophet Jeremiah, Cap. 51, 25, concerning the kingdom of Babylon: "Behold, I am against thee, thou evil mountain, which destroyest all the earth, and I will make thee a burnt mountain" 2c. So one reads now and then in the Psalter and prophets that it is very common for them to call a whole regiment or country and dominion, according to whether it is large or small, a large or small mountain. Thus he says: "That worldly dominions, empires, kingdoms, principalities, cities, councils and commonwealths stand on earth and walk in their order is not man's doing nor ability, but God's rule. For this we see before our eyes, that at all times the multitude that rules is far too small and too weak for the other multitude, and if the multitude or rabble were mad and foolish, there would be scarcely one against a thousand, and soon all would be slain.

56 Who now holds the reins here that

a single person has so many heads under him, who must be subject to him, and hold so much land and people in bondage? Certainly no one, but God alone. Therefore one should give him praise and thanks for it, where it stands and remains. For the devil does not like to see it and challenges it everywhere, on the outside through evil neighbors who cause war and strife, and on the inside with disobedient and rebellious subjects. For he does not want any state to have peace or a regiment to grow and prosper, but, as he is a liar and a murderer from the beginning, so he must attack both the spiritual kingdom with lies and the worldly kingdom with murder. Thus our sin and ingratitude also deserve that God should inflict it upon us, so that we (as said above [§ 6 ff.]), having learned by experience, may also learn to sing this verse with thanksgiving, that it is he who must give and keep it, that there may be peace, and that it may be well in the regiment.

57 For this is his name: "He who establishes the mountains in his power"; as the Scriptures also use to speak, as of King Solomon, that under him the kingdom was confirmed, or became firm and stable [1 Kings 2:12.], confirmatum vel consolidatum, that it neither wavered nor floundered, as it had floundered before under David, that he always sat on the scupper, and could not bring it where he would, and well learned by his own experience that it was not in his strength nor power to make the reign, whether it was already established, and steady, as the world thinks, and many such fools sit in the regiment, who presume and presume to hold and handle the regiment with their wisdom and understanding, thinking that everything must go according to their head, as if it all stood on them, and where they were not, the world must fall.

But one also sees how they run at it and do nothing, that one must say that it is not in their hand, and. They should command the regiment, or perish over it, and must therefore let this verse remain true, that he does it by his power, when he says: You shall be king, prince or regent 2c., and gives the country and subjects that they accept it.

and obey, and fes] must thus go and remain, because he so orders it (as St. Paul Rom. 13, 2. calls the worldly regime his order), and does not let it happen that one destroys the same 2c. But this has been said often and much else, without it being seen that he teaches this here, that ruling the land and the people is not at all in man's wit or strength, but belongs to God's power and might alone.

59. "And is armed (saith he) with power," that is, as he said before [vv. 5, 6] of the spiritual regiment, that he must both give it, and also receive where he hath given it: so also of this he saith, that he must both do it, and is not only armed to approach, but also to execute. To establish regiments (he says) is yours; but that they also remain as they are set, that is also yours; and if you never hold and protect, then neither protection nor strength helps to maintain a regiment, as all histories sufficiently show, and the pagans themselves have also seen and testified, as Virgilius 1) says of Hector: If Troy might have been saved by man's hand and strength, then she would have been saved by the hero, Hector.

(60) But it goes like this: if a country is to perish, that God will never protect it, it may have the finest, strongest people, and yet it will not help. Babylon was such a city, like none other in the world, and impossible to win, and yet so shamefully turned back four times, as it was least to be missed. For he is able (says the 107th Psalm, v. 16) to break the doors of brass and to shatter the bars of iron, 2c. and there is no power too strong for him that he cannot suddenly break if he wants to. Therefore, as long as he protects, so long stands and remains any country or empire; and if he also ceases to protect, it is nothing more. Therefore we should learn not to rely on ourselves, nor to presume to preserve anything, but to call upon him and trust in him.

Now, with what does he do this, or what kind of armor does he need for this? "With power" (he says), that is his armor, which he has put on, and with it he protects and defends. For thus he has arranged it, that it may be

1) Virgilius

. II, v. 291. sq.

so must go, and will not have it otherwise; as he saith [Matt. 26:52], "He that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword." The same order and will does it, and directs it, that he must go by it; this is his power and strength, and must have no other armor nor armor for it: and though any man cast himself out against it, and begin any thing, yet it goeth not forth; as follows.

V. 8. who stills the roar of the sea, the roar of its waves, and the raging of the nations.

(62) Then he himself shows how the government of the world is, that it is contested everywhere, and the devil stirs up all kinds of things against it, rebellion and war, and speaks, according to the scriptural way, of kingdoms, lands and people, as of a great flood of water and the roaring of the sea, indicating how it goes with it, as on a wild, impetuous sea, where it storms and roars everywhere with the roaring of the waves, as if everything wanted to go over and over: that [it] is just as little in man's power to calm, as little can the sea be calmed, when the storm winds fall from it and the waves roar. But he can increase such a roar if he wants, and make it suddenly subside and become still, just as he made Pharaoh king with all his people still, when he stormed and raged against the people of Israel as if he wanted to devour them [Ex. 14:27]. How he quieted the king of Assyria, who roared and raged against the city of Jerusalem, and slew a thousand men a hundred times in one night [2 Kings 19:35]. For so mighty is he, if he will keep it, that all the world must be silent when he tells them, though they be wicked, and rage as though they would turn all things back.

63 He also calms the raging of the nations. He himself indicates what the roar of the sea and the waves are, saying: "If a nation or a mob wants to be mad and foolish and start a riot, it can soon be called to cease and be quiet. Therefore, both war and rebellion, which no man can prevent or help, must be resisted until the hour comes for them to perish; then he will let go his hand and stop, so that it may be seen that the people are not able to sustain themselves.

V. 9. so that those who dwell at the same ends will be astonished at your signs.

(64) You sign 1) in such a way that all the world must fear, as if they were struck in the mouth, when they see that you do not want to suffer, and prove your signs, so that others must be shocked by them and be horrified by them, and confess that they are called your miracles and God's signs, and all the world must say: God has done this, God has made peace, and He has fought off the enemies, which no man could have done, nor could have provided for himself; as David well experienced and learned in his stories, and we have also experienced in our own things, and can boast of it. So you have both that he establishes and maintains the regiment, both at home and outside, among neighbors and subjects.

You make merry what there webert, both of the 2) morning and evening.

(65) When God makes peace, quiets the turmoil, and gives a quiet regiment, then it happens that everything stirs and weaves, and everything is joyful; namely, in the morning, when the people go out to work in the field, or drive out the cattle, or bring them in, then one hears them all going out with joy and working, singing and shouting, the cattle bleating and screaming, and so going home again in the evening. After that, in the evening and at night, the animals and game go out of the forest and holes to feed. As the 104th Psalm, v. 20-23, also describes: "Thou makest darkness, and night cometh; and all the wild beasts are stirred up; the young lions roaring for prey, and seeking their meat of God. But when the sun goes out, they rise up and lie down in their holes. So man goes out to his work and to his farm until the evening. This is what he means here, weaving or going out in the morning and evening, both of men to their work and of animals to their food.

Now, that everything weaves, goes out and comes in so safely and happily, nobody gives that,

for the dear peace. For where there is no peace, there is not much singing, nor merriment, nor the cattle bleating in the field, nor the shepherds with the bagpipe, but all must remain at home and in the wall, as shut up and imprisoned, so that they cannot move merrily, nor attend to their work and food.

67. Therefore, one may praise and thank God where He gives peace. But it is a grievous plague that all the world should so go and misuse peace and all the good things and pleasures that peace brings, and not even think where they got such security and good things, nor how dear and great they are to be esteemed, until they have to learn it through war and all kinds of punishment. These are now the two pieces of his regiment or order, as he establishes and maintains them 3) himself, and those who want to challenge and destroy it, throw it on their heads in their time. Now follows the third, which is the house regiment, by which he gives and maintains nourishment of the body.

V. 10, 11: Thou dost visit the land, and water it, and make it very rich. God's fountain has water in abundance; you make her grain grow well, for so you build the land. Thou waterest its furrows, and wettest its plowed ground; with rain thou makest it soft, and blessest its crops.

(68) This is easy to understand, but to learn that this is also God's work and gift, and is no more with man than with any other. For the devil, as is his way, is always hindering and preventing food and daily bread wherever he can, and we would certainly not have long to eat if God Himself did not give and keep the grain in the field and the bread in the house. But how many are there on earth who believe that God does such things, or even think to thank Him for them? Meanwhile they go about eating and drinking, feeding and grazing on the goods, like a sow from the trough, or gathering, scratching and scratching, and do not do otherwise than as if they owed nothing to God, and had it all from themselves. And make

1) "You sign" - you do signs.

2) "des" sehit in the original and in the Erlanger.

3) In the original: "ers", which is: he she.

so that they do not enjoy any of the goods with love and joy, which they could have, if they would only give God the glory and say such *Deo gratias*: Lord, you have given me everything, and you also preserve it, so that I can use it with peace. So everything would be blessed and joyful, and the bread would still taste so good and be good for you, and you could still be so happy with all the goods, and you would not need any food or effort. But if you splurge with contempt for God, or if you are stingy and miserly, your reward is that you are deprived of blessings and have an evil conscience, and in the end you must either become a beggar over it, or you will never be able to enjoy your possessions.

69. Now," he says, "over all the goods that you give spiritually and temporally to all the race, you also do this, that you build the land and make it grow out of the ground for all the people and all the animals, so that all may be fed and make merry: "You look after the land," see for yourself, and take care of it in due time, like a faithful householder, how and when it should grow or bear, provide rain and water enough for it yourself, so that it all turns out well, and the land becomes very rich 2c.

(70) And he says much about how God himself waters and waters the land, both from above with rain and from below with springs and streams from the earth, as a special gift and blessing; as it is, since without water nothing can grow or live on earth. Therefore, all cities and villages must be situated near water, or at least have wells, and yet they do not appear to have it, nor are they respected for having it. For what is more common in the world than water, and who has ever thought to thank God for it? But how necessary and delicious it is, we would have to say, if we should not have water for an hour. And that it is God's gift from heaven, he can well teach us, if he does not let it rain for a moon or two, since both wells and streams dry up, so that both men and cattle have to cry for water. Such experiences finely show us that he must do it himself, and that no human ability and diligence can help that a stalk or a grain can be watered.

2c., and for our sake everything that lives there must fade away and all plants perish. But where he gives water, everything increases and grows, and bears fruit, so that everything can recover and flourish.

(71) But especially of one's own house-stone or little estate he says, "God's fountain has abundance of water. For the Scripture teaches that every man's little treasure is called a fountain or spring, as Proverbs 5:15-18 also does. But here he calls it God's goodness, as God gives and blesses. For just as a fountain always has water and does not run dry, since it does not receive its water from man but from God Himself, so also a pious man's house is a true fountain, given and preserved by God, so that it must have enough and not run dry or dry up; but what now springs up and is consumed, already grows new for the next year, and always springs up from the earth (as from an eternal fountain), from one year to the next.

72. Therefore, everyone should write this verse over his little house or estate and thank God that he has such a fountain, which God Himself makes and gives, and which is called his fountain, as it is not acquired or maintained by man's work or effort, but is provided and given by Him; And so it always remains full and wells up, so that its water cannot be taken from it, even though it is small and insignificant, and the devil and evil neighbors do not grant it; otherwise, if it were to be acquired by men, it would soon be spoiled and devastated.

Thus, the word "God's fountain" both indicates that He gives and sustains domestic food and goods. The dear fathers were able to speak so finely and sweetly of God's gifts, and to recognize them and give thanks for them. Accordingly, every ruler or sovereign may call his country and people a little fountain of God (as David also called his city and people, in which God's word and love were, Ps. 46:5), and thank God for it, and leave their great kingdoms and sovereignties to others who do not have them, because they do not recognize them as God's gift.

74. from this it follows: where god himself waters, and makes his fountains to water.

must be guessed that one bushel carries ten or twenty bushels, and so on all the things that are to be carried. And describe how it springs and increases, namely, "that he waters the furrows, and moistens his plowed land," that the field becomes finely soft, both from above with dew and rain, and below with sap; "for thus (he says) you build the land. You are the right builder who builds the land, much more and better than the husbandman, who does nothing more to it than to break up the field, plow it and sow it, and then leave it. God Himself must always be present with rain and warmth, and do everything so that it grows and turns out well, while the husbandman lies at home and sleeps, and has done nothing without preparing the soil. But God must build it Himself if anything is to grow out of it; otherwise the farmer would have to plow and sow forever and work himself to death before he would bring forth a grain, and all his toil and labor would be lost if God did not do it Himself. Not that he should not therefore work and do all that he knows and can, for he himself demands and praises the work, because he says, "his furrows and his plowed soil," but only wants to show us that there is not enough of it, yes, nothing at all is accomplished, if he does not do it himself, through our effort, thought and counsel.

For if it were to be in our power to devise it ourselves, nothing would come of it, and we would be like that farmer who was too clever for our Lord God, and God could never make it right for him, as he asked him, to let him devise it himself, as he wished, and God heard his request and granted it to him. Then the farmer started and did it as he wanted it, and it went according to all his wishes, so that it rained and the sun shone when he wanted it, and it was the most delicious weather, as one should want it, and it was most beautiful, that he cried to get such a good year, the like of which no man had experienced. But at the last, when he harvested, he found only hollow ears and empty straw; then he thought that he had forgotten the wind.

(76) This indicates that we cannot do it (if it were up to us), nor can we do it ourselves, even if He gives rain and everything in due time; but He must also bless the plant (as He says here), so that it flourishes and grows well; as St. Paul also says about spiritual cultivation, 1 Eor. 3, 6. 7.: "I have planted, another has watered, but God has given the flourishing. So then neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but GOD who gives the flourishing."

V. 12. You crown the year with your goods, and your footsteps drip with fatness.

(77) He includes all that God gives throughout the year. For if you go through the whole year, you will find that almost every month it brings new goods, fruits, meat, birds, fish, 2c., and each one fine in its time. May brings grass and all kinds of flowers, from which you get milk and butter; summer and autumn all kinds of grain and beautiful berries, fruits, wine and fruit, spilling, cherries, plums, apples, pears, nuts, grain, barley, corn. In addition the winter, how cold and dead it is, but it gives wood, so that one always has something to fetch. Every animal and all kinds of birds feed and bear in their season. And those who have experienced it say that the sea brings four or five new kinds of fish every moonshine. That is, "the year crowned", or a beautiful wreath and a round circle made throughout the year; and again, that always comes something new to see and enjoy with pleasure.

78. "And your footsteps are dripping with fatness." That is, where thou treadest and walkest, there only drippeth 2) and overfloweth with good, that it beareth all things with heaps, and smiteth them with blessing. For where he gives the blessing, so that it is not spoiled by thieves and peelers, or vermin and other plagues, there it goes in such a way that one must say: Here God has gone, there it drips everything with fat, and is so full that it can no longer carry. For where he himself goes, there it must certainly grow. That is why they are called "God's footsteps"; because he makes

2) In the original: "treifts", immediately following: "Ireufits"; in the Wittenberg and in the Jena: "treuffts".

1) Instead of: "the sun shone" in the original: "scheinet".

(as stated above [§ 74]) even a farmer or tiller from God, as he himself must build the field, and see to it everywhere himself, if it is to be well fed. Therefore, those who teach agriculture say that the footsteps of the master must make the field fat, and that there is no better dung to fertilize the field than that which falls from the master's shoes, that is, where he himself has often walked and trodden. So God must also be there with his footsteps, where the field shall grow fat and bear well. And we should be thankful where he himself walks and stands (if only we could give him room from avarice and seek such things from him). For where he does not go, there it cannot go, there the devil goes with his footsteps, and makes everything die and spoil.

V. 13, 14: The dwellings of the wilderness also are fat, that they ooze; and the hills stand about them rejoicing. The fields are full of sheep, and the meadows are thick with grain; they sing and rejoice.

He calls villages and farms "dwellings in the wilderness," which are not in cities or hard by, but far away and lonely in the field. There it also runs from fat, that it does not go alone at home, but also outside everywhere around and gives enough. Likewise also "the hills" (he says), which is not exactly country, as their country kind are almost vain hills, there it all stands most amusingly, finely green and multicolored of foliage, grass and flowers, that no amusing mirror is on earth, but a beautiful green seed in the Lenzen; In addition, on the meadow full of sheep goes, because they have fresh pasture enough and grow fat, and the meadows or grounds are thick and full of grain, that one sees everywhere his pleasure, how he gives everything on earth abundantly and superfluously, not only to the need, but also to the pleasure. And so all the world can rejoice and be glad about God's grace and gifts, both spiritual and bodily (as they are described in this psalm), if they could only see and recognize it rightly.

19. German interpretation of the 68th Psalm,

from the Easter Day, Ascension and Pentecost.*)

Versaht in May 1521, printed in 1521.

The 68th **) Psalm of the Easter Day, Ascension Day and Pentecost Day.

V. 2. 1) GOD^a) arise, that his enemies may be scattered, and his haters flee from his presence. ^{b)}

When Christ died, God acted as if he were asleep and did not see the raging Jews, so he had them strengthened and gathered, and the poor disciples fled and scattered. When the Jews thought they had won and Christ was lying down, God woke up and raised Christ from the dead. The game was turned around, the disciples gathered together, and the Jews were divided, some by grace who had given themselves to the faith, and some by disgrace who had been disturbed by the Romans.

1) Here, as elsewhere, we have made the counting of the verses the same as in our Bible. In the original, the number of verses is one less, because the title of the psalm is not counted.

a) Marginal gloss: This "GOT" is Christ Himself, who raises Himself from the dead, One GOT with the Father.

b) Marginal gloss: "God's face" means that God reveals Himself and makes Himself present in an announcing way, which happens through His word and work, and this is terrible to the wicked, but comforting to the pious.

2. in such judgment and being the prophet saw, and with great displeasure at the Jews triumphing in Christ's death and the disciples' flight, he lifts up and says: "Let it be enough for God's enemies to glorify? let God arise and turn the page, raise Christ from the dead.

V. 3. As smoke weaves, so weave; as wax melts before the fire, so must the unrighteous 4) perish before God.

3. two beautiful parables, of smoke and wax; the smoke from the wind, the wax from the fire passes away, in which the Holy Spirit is shown, who is a wind and fire, Luc. 3, 16. For spiritus is called a wind, so that God blows on us, and makes spiritual people out of us.

2) 1523 edition: Prangen.

3) In the original: "gloryern"; in the 1523 edition: "Rühmen".

4) Edition of 1523: Gottlosen, as in the Psalter translation of 1524. Cf. St. Louis edition, vol. IV, 56.

*) During the night of May 4-5, 1521, Luther was taken to Wartburg Castle. Initially, he had no other books at his disposal than the Bible, which he read in Greek and Hebrew. But soon he also began to write, namely this German interpretation of the 68th Psalm, which is the first writing he completed at the Wartburg. He was prompted to write it by the pieces from this psalm that were sung during mass on the feasts of the Ascension and Pentecost. He celebrated these two feasts with the castle community on May 9 and 19. Already on May 26, he sent the manuscript to Melanchthon in Wittenberg (De Wette, vol. II, p. 6). Melanchthon saw to the printing of the same, and already on August 6 the psalm will have left the press (Weim. Ausg., Bd. VIII p. 1), but it is not until November 11 that we have news that this writing had been distributed among the public. It was first published in Wittenberg by Johann Grüneberg under the title: "Deutsch Auslegung des sieben vnd sechtzigsten Psalmen, von dem Ostertag. Hymelfart vnd Pfingsten. D. Martinus L." In addition to this, the Weimar edition lists four individual editions, one of which is marked with the year 1523 and the place of printing "Wittenberg", another with the year 1524, to which is added at the end: "Gedruckt zu Wittenberg Melchior Lotter der Jünger. M. D. XXiii." In the collections: in the Wittenberg (<1553), vol. III, p. 11d; in the Jena (1564), vol. I, p. 463; in the Altenburg, vol. I, p. 741; in the Leidiger, vol. VI, p. 256; in the Erlanger, vol. 39, p. 178; and in the Weimar, vol. VIII, p. 1. We reproduce the text according to the Weimar edition, but with special attention to the readings of the 1523 edition, since we are firmly convinced that the improvements in the latter were made by Luther's own hand. This is supported by the fact that the text of the Bible agrees with that of the Psalter translation of 1524.

**) In the original according to the Vulgate count: 67.

This wind and fire came into the world from heaven after Christ's resurrection, and through the gospel the world was converted.

Now it is shameful that such great enemies are compared to smoke and wax, who think that they want to dispute heaven and earth. The smoke goes over itself, makes itself self-willed in the air, acts as if it wanted to blind the sun and storm the sky. But what is it? If a little wind comes, the broad smoke weaves itself and disappears, so that no one knows where it remains. So all the enemies of the truth have great intentions and do terrible things; in the end they are like the smoke against the wind and the sky, which also disappears in itself without wind.

5 So the wax is heavy and hard, like a stone or wood, but before the fire it melts like water, even consumes and disappears. So all the enemies of the truth, when they start and come into the fire, they are more important, heavier and harder to look at than the rock Christ himself [1 Cor. 10:4], but if the fire of the divine word and spirit [Jer. 23:29, Luc. 3:16] comes in addition, then it is over with them, mercifully, if they want, mercifully, if they do not want.

V. 4. And the righteous shall rejoice and leap before the face of God, and have all joy in gladness.

(6) These are the beloved disciples, and all lovers of the truth, to whom it is a joy, and a delight, and a pleasure, that Christ should rise again, and that the truth should stand; who before had all sorrow, when Christ's enemies were subject to him, and rejoiced. 3) Therefore their joy is pure and divine: for they rejoice in the sight of God, and in spiritual things in the truth; but the enemies rejoiced in their wickedness.

V. 5 Sing to God, play psaltery to His name, pave the way for Him who goes in Arabah, 4) LORD is His name; be of good cheer before His face.

1) In the original: "außerstand".

2) "hat" in the 1523 edition; missing in the original.

3) 1523: jauchzeten.

4) 1523: "fahret in der Litter"; in the Psalter translation of 1524: "der da sanft herfähret".

7 That is, praise and glorify Christ as One true God with the Father. For the same thing happened only after the resurrection, as John says [Cap. 7, 39]: "The Holy Spirit was not yet given when Christ was not yet glorified"; but the Holy Spirit glorified Him, that He was the Son of God, Rom. 1, 4. Such future singing and glorification of the divinity of Christ is meant here by the prophet. But since we do not have Christ with us in the flesh, but walk by faith, we cannot begin or indicate His person; so we sing to His name, we praise Him, we show Him, we preach and confess Him, which means here "playing psaltery to His name. 5) Psalter means a book of praise; Psalm means a song of praise or a poem of praise, as the poets make verses, which were sung into the strings of old. With this are indicated vain sermons of the sweet gospel, in which God's grace, glory and praise are preached; that psalliren the fingers to the song of the mouth that, that is, preach beside the deed and miraculous signs.

8) "Paving the way" in this place means to prepare a wicked, swampy, bottomless way with rubble, rice 6) and stone, so that it is good to drive there, where before no one could travel. These are the hearts of men, who before, through evil, rotten, groundless puddles of all kinds of evil desires, have been quite unfit for God's ways, yes, the more one drove in it with the trucks of the law and the commandments, the worse it became, because commandments make no one better, and everyone worse.

(9) But the gospel and the preaching of God's name in Christ establish this way. For faith makes good ground, and drives out all the evil puddles of the evil flesh. So Christ goes in them, that is, he works his works in them, which are love, joy, peace, kindness, gentleness, chastity, Gal. 5:22. For to go is not to stand still, for this life of faith is an increase and a going or journey 7) toward heaven, into that life.

5) So 1523; in the original: "Psalter spielet".

6) In the original: "rytz".

7) In the original: "furd", in other old editions: "furt". According to the context, this will have to be resolved by "Fuhre" or "Fahrt", not by "Furt" (vnrlun). In Dietz, the meaning we assume is not.

(10) "He leads in Araboth," indicating the nature and kind of faith. Arab means desolation, Araboth much desolation. And the prophet here touches the figure of Exodus 13:21, 22, where it is written, "God the Lord went before the children of Israel to show the way in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night, that he might be the guide in both times: the pillar of cloud passed not away by day, nor the pillar of fire by night before all the people." There was no way in the great wild wilderness, neither was there one in the air, 1) the cloud and the fire went before, and led God in Araboth, that is, in untraveled, wild, desolate ways.

(11) So^a is his way, he likes to go wild and desolate ways. These are all the ways of faith, which does not travel as the senses or reason direct, but stands calmly, letting God lead it, not wanting to and not being able to know where to, how far, where through, or what time. Now this is called hovering over us and going in Araboth, when he rules in us through faith, and we are calmly obedient, thus letting him hover and go. All this has happened through the gospel. 2)

12. "LORD is his name." Though he be a man, yet is he set over all things a LORD, wherefore we should follow and let him pass over us in Araboth, though the Hebrew is, In Domino nomen ejus, in GOD is his name, that is, his name is in the Godhead, that he also may be a GOD as well as the Father; for he is not separated from GOD, but is in GOD, and abideth in GOD.

(13) Be of good cheer before him, that is, have a good conscience and confidence in his grace, which is made by the faith that makes him soar in Arabah. For he that believeth hath peace and joy before God, and is of good cheer.

v. 6. He is a father of the fatherless, and a judge of widows; he is a GOOD in his holy habitation.

14. ye shall be of good cheer, not only that he will make you of good conscience in 3) faith, but because ye must forsake your father, your friend, your body, your goods, and your honor on earth for faith's sake, that ye must be poor, miserable orphans and widows, suffering violence and injustice from every man, ye have here a consolation, that the LORD of all creatures is a father of such orphans, and a judge 4) of such widows. For this he is not far off, but near you; you must not seek him in Jerusalem or Rome. For where his Christians are, there is his dwelling place, there is he sure; and is not there alone, but will be a God there, in whom all hearts shall have refuge, who giveth, doeth, and is able to do all things; lately, in whom ye shall have all things that are to be had in a God.

15) But here faith is necessary; for the Father, the Judge, the God, is present there verbally, His dwelling is holy, that is, set apart, no one can see inside except faith; if you believe that He is your Father, Judge, your God, then He is.

V. 7: He is the God who makes the dwellers of the house of one accord, who brings out the prisoners in due time, but the stubborn remain in the drought.

(16) All doctrine and life apart from faith divide and disunite men, and there must be sects, even if there were but two of them in one house, because their thing is based on outward works and ways, which must be manifold. There is one who prays so much, another who prays this, another who prays that; one is a Carthusian, another is a barefooted; one waltzes, another makes offerings, another fasts.

1) So interpungirt the Wittenbergers. In the other editions: "Luft, da" 2c.

a) Marginal gloss: So this Lord does not go forth with visible splendor on horses and chariots, but in Araboth secretly in the spirit,

2) Instead of the preceding passage, from the second line of 10 to here, the following is found in the 1523 edition: Arab means gentle or sweet, just as Solomon Sprüchw. 3, 24. says: "Your sleep will be Araba "

is, as one says from German, you will sleep softly or sweetly. Where now right faith is, there is such a sure, quiet, gentle and sweet conscience, which fears nothing, and therefore lives, like a man, who sleeps quietly, sweetly and gently without worry. That is then actually the right dwelling of Christ, there he is gladly, in the litter he lets himself be carried gladly, there he rides in Araboth. It is almost his talk, of the kind of a good conscience and right faith. - Also the marginal gloss: "So lead" 2c. is omitted there.

3) 1523: "im"; original: "yn".

4) 1523: Richter; original: Rächer.

5) "your" 1523; missing in the original.

Wherever hearts are attached to this, 1) disunity, hatred, hope and all misery are sure to follow. Therefore there is no God, no doctrine, no life, no way that makes unanimous, but this God with his way of faith. The same faith draws us all together into the spirit, where all things are equal, and all outward differences fall away; not that no difference remains outward, but that no heart is attached to it, and is divided against anyone, even though all the world dwells in one house.

(17) Now it is necessary that a man first be taken captive by the law, and come into the bondage of sin, that is, into the fear of his conscience. For he who does not feel sin does not seek grace, nor does he respect the gospel or faith. Therefore, the law of the conscience is a master, a chain, a rope and a prison; for the law shows and makes known sin, and thereby sows the conscience, Rom. 4:15 [3:20] and 7:7 ff.

(18) Now God does not lead us out of these bonds when it seems necessary to us, but leaves us to be humbled and martyred within, until we become thirsty for mercy; so He comes and gives His word, to which we cling, and so let us 2) carry it out, that we may come from a frightened, stupid conscience into a good, safe conscience. These are the two works and two exercises of Christ in us, that He kills us and awakens us, lowers us and raises us up, each in its time, as the two pillars in the desert, the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire [Ex. 13:21, 22], show.

19 But the stubborn, who hear neither, let them not be told, abide in their sects and outward life; they also must dwell in drought, that is, they bear no fruit, for they believe not, so they have not. Although outwardly, before their eyes, they consider themselves the most useful, the best, the holiest 3) and the cleverest in heaven and earth, they may judge that those who are believers are the best.

1) So 1523; original: anhangend to this.

2) "us" 1523; missing in the original.

3) In the Weimar edition and in all individual editions except the one of 1523: "better most holy". This reading (for which we find no analogy in Dietz) already offended the old editors. Our reading is found in the Wittenberg and the Jena editions. In the edition of 1523 the words "besser heiligsten" are missing.

The prophet calls them Sorerim, who live in the drought, and they alone in the green paradise. The prophet calls them Sorerim. I cannot translate them as "the obstinate," who never want to go in the right way, nor can they be guided or governed; as they are told and instructed, they go astray, like the wanton, untamed grates.

V. 8. O God, when you went out before the face of your people, when you walked in the wilderness, Selah.

So far we have heard the preface of what the prophet intends to sing in this psalm, namely of Christ and his gospel. Now he attacks it, and starts with the old figure, of which 10] it is said that God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt through the wilderness, and is of this opinion: O Christ, at the time when you went out from Egypt before the Israelite people, which was only a figure of your resurrection, by which you first of all went right out of Egypt of this world to your people to the Father, and so lead them by your example and word through the wilderness of faith after you also to the Father. If at the time of your resurrection the earth trembled and the heavens dripped before you, how much more should they tremble and water in the right way? For I read in Exodus 19:16 ff. how Mount Sinai was thunderstruck, thundered, and darkened with a great tempest, so that the earth shook, and did as a great tempest is wont to do; and there was given the law of Moses, which was signified by such tempest and rain. This is what the prophet means by the following verse:

V. 9: Then the earth shook and the heavens trembled before the face of this God of Sinai and before the face of God of Israel.

21. he^a) calls him a GOD of Mount Sinai and Israel, binding him to a place and person outwardly. Because at the time of the

a) Marginal gloss: Dxo. 6 [2 Mos. 6, 3.]s: „In nomine

TUN' non eoMibuk chin ei". eb normon isbuü inoKadiltz 68b 6b nullins ot'moloAiae, Hnia Inne first Dons HirastaM, Dons Isaee, Osus ksra'I, alliMbus, brains aMern guiduslideb 6b oinnidns TUN'.

Figures that walked in outward ways and works, worship had to be externally bound to a place and person; but in the New Testament, since the figures are out, and all are equally unanimous in faith, there is no longer any place, any person, where God's service, or He Himself might be bound and called by it; but whoever and wherever, and if anyone believes, he is God's servant, whether at Sinai or at Babylon, whether he be a Gentile or a Jew.

The earthquake and rain at that time signified the preaching of the heavenly gospel and the conversion of men on earth, which took place after the right departure of Christ from this world. This is what he is talking about now:

V. 10. O God, a free rain you will judge, the inheritance is ever yours, it is weary, you will prepare it.

Here he calls it "rain"; above [v. 9] he calls it "drops from heaven. Here "a free rain", which does not fall in one place, but everywhere, where he wants, above the drops only on the mountain Sinai. Here God gives the rain himself, above the heavens are dripping. For this purpose he uses a special word, in Hebrew *Thaniph*, which I have translated "you will speak", and that is why, because the same word actually means to weave something back and forth into the four places of the world; just as the priests in the Old Testament lifted some sacrifices up and down badly before God, but some into the cross, at noon and midnight, at morning and evening. Thus David says that Christ will speak the free rain into all the world, and not only into Jerusalem or Sinai.

(24) Now the opinion is that the preaching of the New Testament after the right departure of Christ from this world will be much more glorious than the preaching of the Old Law. For where there it fell sparsely, here it shall rain abundantly; where there it fell only in one place, Sinai, here it shall rain in all four places of the world; where there it fell only to one people, Israel, here a free rain shall be poured on everyone, Gentile and Jew; the gospel shall not be bound to one place or people at all, as that preaching was.

of the law. Also those drops gave the heavens, that is, the angels through Moses, in God's stead, as St. Paul teaches Gal. 3, 19. But this rain you, God, shall pour out yourself.

(25) Free rain should also be understood to mean that the teaching of the gospel is free, and makes free hearts, which, not bound externally to any work or way, live only in free faith. This is Christian freedom, of which Ps. 110:3 says, "Thy people shall be free." 1) But the rain at Sinai, the law of Moses, makes captive, unfree hearts, with many ways and works, outwardly; even so it does not make a free, happy conscience, but stupid, restless and unwilling consciences; but the gospel makes happy, willing, free consciences; for there all is free.

(26) Now, as at Sinai the earth trembled at the tempest, so there is also something against it in the New Testament, namely, that [those] who have faith and the gospel must suffer much in this whole life, and the body (that is, the earth) 2) is given no rest, must live, and be in continual exercise until death, that the vices of the flesh may be put to death, and the old Adam be destroyed. Therefore he speaks here: "The inheritance is yours", and "it is tired" before so much trembling and suffering, may well be consolation and abstention. Because it is yours, and you alone are the inheritor of it, no Moses, no servant can rule here, as the people of Israel were ruled by Moses (for it must be ruled by the one who can dwell, lead and guide in the spirit; but that is you alone), therefore it is yours, and you will well prepare it.

(27) For through suffering the world thinks that all things should perish; but thou through suffering hast prepared and made ready thine inheritance in the best manner, and by that very thing it rises, that it may seem to perish. Moses was not able to do this in his people, because it was not his inheritance. Nor can any outward saints do it, for where their outward ways and works lie down, there it lies down; in the

1) According to the translation in the ksait. juxta Heb: ?opnli tni spontane! erunt. (Weim. Ausg., vol. IV, 233.)

2) The brackets are set by us.

3) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers; Weimarsche: soll.

Spirit is nothing, neither faith nor gospel, that could suffer and overcome such defeat.

V. 11. Your cattle will dwell inside; you will prepare for the humble, O God, in your kindness.

(28) Through the preaching or rain of the gospel, devout and simple people are gathered into Christianity; they are Christ's cattle, that is, his sheep, oxen and donkeys, as he himself calls them. The sheep are all of us; the oxen are the apostles and preachers; the donkeys, who labor and bear the cross with many sufferings; these are all willing and gladly under Christ. Therefore he speaks "your cattle"; as if he should say, Mosi's cattle, and those who go about with law and works, without faith, are not your cattle; for they are not willing, did not see the free rain, do all 1) their thing for fear of chastisement or desire of benefit; therefore they also do not dwell or abide in your inheritance.

29) Since there is much suffering in Christ's cattle for the sake of faith, that they are greatly humiliated and oppressed, despised by everyone, God, on the other hand, prepares His own goodness for them, so that through much humiliation they only taste and experience more and more how good, sweet and lovely God is. And so the many humiliations and sufferings teach the simple believing people that they recognize God more, trust and believe more, and thus become rich, strong and certain in the confidence of divine goodness. This is what he means when he says: "You will prepare the humble in your goodness", that is, you prepare your goodness for him through his humiliation and suffering, and he lets go of his goodness and takes damage from it, so that he only gathers much willingness and treasure in your goodness; this is nothing else than increase of faith, Rom. 5, 3. 4. Mosi's cattle, works saints and law followers never come to this, because faith and the free rain must do this. So man prepares for him all evil, God prepares for him all good.

V. 12. God will give the excuse that the evangelists will be a great host.

30 So also Christ says Luc. 21, 15: "I will give you a mouth (that is, a speaking and talking) and wisdom, which all your enemies shall not gainsay." And Matth. 10, 20.: "It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaks in you." For where GOD does not give to speak out, no preaching is useful. The apostles did not preach anything else, but as the Holy Spirit gave them to speak out; as Lucas Apost. 2, 4) 4. For where God does not give, there is no preaching, or is vain and harmful preaching; and when He gives, He gives vain words of grace, that is, the gospel. Therefore he would not give the law of Moses by himself, but gave it through the angels, in Moses' and Aaron's ministry (Gal. 3, 19.). But here he speaks that he will give vain evangelists, as also St. Paul 2 Cor. 3, 6. speaks: "We are preachers of the spirit, and not (of) the letter", that is, preachers of grace, and not of the law. This was done through the apostles and their followers in all the world. For he hath given them much, and sent them into all countries; as it is fitting in the time of grace.

But when he takes a warlike word and says: "With great hosts", which is not a bad crowd, but hosts, armed and ordered for battle, he shows how the word of God does not make peace, but strife on earth. As also Christ says [Matth. 10, 34.]: "I did not come to bring peace on earth, but the sword." Also that of the new testament, the fighting and warfare should not be worldly, but spiritual; not with iron and armor, horse and man, but only with the word of God, as St. Paul says in 2 Cor. 10, 4: "The armor of our knighthood is not bodily, but strong and active, since God works with it." Therefore, although he says here: there shall be many great hosts, yet he says, there shall be evangelists, 6)

1) So 1523; original: all.

2) So the edition of 1523 instead of: the.

3) So the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers. Weimarsche: "yhn" and "ihn".

4) In the original: "Act. 4." The Weimar in the margin: "Apgsch. 4, 8. 31."

5) Walch and the Erlanger: "Greek". Wittenberger: "Greek".

6) "his" 1523; missing in the original.

and those who argue with words and excuses; when we see that the world is conquered to faith only with the gospel.

V. 13 The kings of the hosts shall be kind one to another, and the ornaments of the house shall divide the spoil.

32 The Scripture calls Christ, *Dominum exercituum*, a Lord of hosts, because his Christian people fight through the gospel without ceasing, and always fight against the devil, the world and the flesh. The kings of these hosts are the apostles, considered poor servants before the world, but great kings before God. For they are the ones who converted all the world, each one bringing his army to Christ in his own place. These same kings were of one mind, loved one another, preached one thing, namely, the faith as given in the gospel; therefore they produced much fruit.

33. But after the apostles the bishops soon became divided, preached many things, so that in the end neither faith nor gospel, but the doctrine and works of men, through which innumerable sects and disagreements arose, drove them, so that they are not kings of the host, but sissies and princes of the carnival crowd, walking along in appearance, and there is no seriousness; That this verse cannot be understood at all, because only the apostles were unanimous all around in faith, teaching, ruling and living; although some bishops followed them afterwards, but never all of them were as unanimous as the apostles, much less were the prophets in the Old Testament unanimous, so that not for nothing this verse proclaims the apostles to be a miracle. In this way they also brought forth so much fruit and converted the world that no one after them has done so much.

34 The Hebrew language has a way that it calls a housemother or wife a house ornament. For where a woman and a child would live, 1) there might be neither house, village nor

Cities on earth, and a house without a wife and child is as if it were not a house. This is especially good for the holy mother, the church; she is a true housemother, and the bride of Christ, who also adorns Christ's house with many children through the gospel. The prophet speaks of this here, that the housemother, who divides up the plunder or the spoil, needs to use disputatious words again. For in war, the victor takes the plunder and the spoil.

35 Now the kings of the host have honestly contended through the gospel, and have wrested the world from the devil, and deprived him of his kingdom. Now the mother of the church divides such robbery and assigns them to various ministries of God, according to which each one is sent; some to be prophets, some to be teachers, some to be governors, some to serve the poor in common, as all this is described by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:7 ff. Of this robbery Christ also says Luc. 11, 21. 22. that a stronger man overcomes the strong, takes away his armor and divides the robbery.

V.14. If you sleep between the borders, the fronts of the doves will be covered with silver, and their back wings will be golden.

36. what wants to become here? What are these dark words? First of all, it is to be known that the birds' wings mean preachers or preaching, like the cherubim at the ark [Ex. 37, 7. 9.]. For the word of God, as the 147th Psalm, v. 15, says, runs fast, yes, flews and hovers over us. The dove is also the church that flews when it preaches; the [wings] 2) are then oversilvered when it preaches the pure Scripture and Word of God, which is called Ps. 12, 7. and Is. 1, 22. silver.

37. but when human teachings fly astray,

1) In all individual editions: "thett" or "thet", that is, thäte = would not be there. In such a way this word is used quite often by Luther. Cf. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. VIII, 1035,? 12 and our note on it. Ibid. Col. 1052, K 54. St. Louis Edition, Vol. V, 251, § 27. Therefore, an alteration of the

Reading not permissible here. Nevertheless, not only Walch and the Erlanger have included a conjecture: "nicht thäte", but also Kawerau in the Weimarsche Ausgabe, Vol. VIII, p. 14: "feilet". Pietfch has confirmed the usage given by us in a note in Vol. XII, p. 100.

2) The word "wing", which is missing in all old editions (including the Weimar one), is found in Walch and in the Erlanger.

These are the wings of a bat, as Isaiah, Cap. 2, 22, covered with mud and stink, or black raven's wings. The silver wings, however, signify the doctrine of faith. But the back wings, golden in color, are the teaching of love. For the whole gospel teaches no more than to believe in 1) God and to love one's neighbor; therefore he calls the fitties, which spread out from the body, oversilvered, and the wings, which end on the back toward the body, gold-colored. For love bears all things and draws near to the body, that is, to our neighbor; but faith stretches us from itself to God. Now in many places in Scripture love is signified by gold; those who believe and love, and teach in this way, are the fittest and the wings of these doves.

(38) And no doubt the prophet took this likeness from natural doves, which are found with white glistening feathers, like silver, and on the back, where the wings come together, a beautiful green, golden color. Also so the dove is a bird without gall, and signifies many spiritual qualities, which are to be in the Christian people. So this verse shows what the gospel teaches and what the word is that the kings of hosts are doing.

(39) Sleeping between the limits or ends is said of spiritual sleep. As, the soul sleeps when it pays no more attention to temporal goods than as dream images, and calls them boundaries. For these temporal things are not indwelling, nor are they a way, but boundaries. For we all have to wait for hours of death and the end of temporal life and goods. Now those who, as St. Paul teaches [1 Cor. 7:31], think that they need this world as if they did not need it, sleep in these limits, and with watchful eyes of faith look over into that life; these are rightly composed, godly people, who can then rightly teach faith and love, as the gospel teaches; that is, be buried with Christ and celebrate the Sabbath.

(40) So this bit of verse teaches that the stingy and ambitious may not be preachers.

1) "an" 1523; original: in.

The gospel is not to be practiced, but those who have no regard for goods, honor, pleasure, or life must do so. For covetousness is severely forbidden in all the Scriptures to ministers and teachers. Therefore they shall carry other silver and gold in their fists, and sleep over the temporal silver and gold; for they must live here 2) on earth, they shall preach; dead men cannot preach. Therefore they shall sleep, and be like the dead in life, considering that this life is but a limit, and that all things are short-lived; which they shall most deeply consider.

V. 15. When the Almighty spreads the kings over them, they will become snow-white in Zalmon.

41 Here he indicates that such teachers, who are not stingy and preach the gospel purely, must be obtained from God alone, as Christ also says Matth. 9, 38: "Ask the householder to send workers into his harvest. So here in this psalm the prophet teaches not only what preaching is, what it is about, who the preachers are, what they should be like, but also where they should come from. And all is to be done about the preaching and word of God in the New Testament, saying: Not when men choose, but when God spreads over the church kings, bishops and preachers, so it goes, they become snow-white, pure from sins. For, since faith alone makes pure from sins, as St. Peter Apost. 15, 9. and faith alone depends on God's word, no one can preach God's word, unless he is sent by God, as St. Paul teaches Rom. 10, 15. it is clear that all the teachings of men are only 3) harmful, impure and black as coal.

But behold, what words does the prophet need. He calls God Shaddai in Hebrew. Now God has many names in the Hebrew tongue, some of which indicate his power, some his height, some other of his works and attributes, just as in German we call him God, Lord, Father, the Supreme, the Almighty, Creator 2c., so he is called

2) "yes" 1523. original: probably.

3) So the edition of 1523 instead of: "mir".

in Hebrew Shaddai, from which perhaps that he feeds all things sweetly, as a mother suckles a child, 1) As if to say: When he who feeds all things will spread bishops over the churches, then the right nourishment will be given, the word of God. And this is the Holy Spirit's own work and name, who is called the Life-Giver and Nourisher, Ps. 104, 27. 30.

43 "To spread" here means to reveal, not only that they may freely come out before the people, and present themselves for Christ's sheep in all ways, not cowering in corners, as the watchmen and miserly or hirelings do, but that they are also clearly spread out in their teaching, and make the dark sayings of the Scriptures bright and open; of which Christ John 10:3 says that the gatekeeper, the Holy Spirit, will open to those who enter through the door. For if God does not open and spread out the Scriptures, no one can understand them, they remain wrapped up, dark and closed.

44 Now Zalmon is called a mountain, of which Judges 9:48 is written. 9, 48. It is written that it was overgrown with large, thick wood, so that in German it would be called a black forest, a dark forest, or black mountain or dark mountain; for Zel means a dark shadow, and Zalmon darkness, as it comes from shadow. This dark forest is the scripture of the Old Testament, which is dark and black in itself; and those 2) who lived without faith in it, all remained dark and black in their own works, had no right understanding nor custom. Yes, like Abimelech Richt. 9, 48, cut wood from the same Zalmon and burned the Shechemites with it, so the teachers corrupt all souls when they teach only law and works, and take the work and word of the fathers as an example, not on faith, but on outward works.

45 But in the New Testament, by God's grace and spreading, the Old Testament leads and is needed in all places to a clear, light understanding of faith, as it remains dark to unbelievers; we take

out of and in the black, dark forest, that we may become snow-white within. For we see that all the apostles refer to the Old Testament, and from it they use bright, clear sayings to teach the faith, which before were in daily use by the Jews, yet remained and still remain dark and black before them. For the Shaddai, the Out-breaker and Nurturer, who spreads out the wings of the doves and cherubim, was not yet given; Christ had to die before and acquire him. Is it not a miracle that the black becomes white and the dark becomes light? These are the works of God.

V. 16. The mountain of God is a fat mountain, an ironed mountain, a fat mountain.

(46) Hitherto the gospel and the evangelists have been described, as they are and as they do. Now he says what they accomplish, what fruit and result comes from it, namely, that through God's word the Christian people is gathered together, and becomes fat, rich, fruitful in all goods, so that it is rightly called "a mountain of God, a fat mountain, a mountain of hills. Thus he paints the church here as a great mountain, having many hills, and one beside and above the other, as the natural mountains also are; but so that [they] are not wild, barren, unfruitful mountains, but so full of fruit that God Himself also would like (as they say) to dwell in it. That is, Christianity is 3) exalted with many rich graces and gifts of God through the gospel and faith, rich in all kinds of virtues, wisdom, art, strength, good works 2c.

But they are not all equal, one has more than the other, as St. Paul points out in 1 Cor. 12:11, 18, "according to which God divides. Therefore he says it is "a mountain of hills" or a mountain with many hills, that is, a mountain and mountains. A mountain, for the sake of the same united faith in all; but hills and mountains, for the sake of various gifts and distributions of the Spirit, in which they are unequal, so that the inequality of gifts remains in the equality of faith, and the fatness or fruitfulness (which stands only in unity) exists.

1) So derived from 1V, (Weim. Ausg.).

2) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers; original: *Zwilchs*"; edition 1523: *wilcher*".

3) "is" 1523; missing in the original.

v. 17: Why do you leap over the hills? This is the mountain on which God is pleased to dwell; indeed, he will dwell on it to the end.

(48) Here the unity is out; call many mountains, which are also hills, that is, the synagogue and its like, which, without equality of faith and unity, are divided into many sects and unequal works of outward practices, and are not one in any thing, but in the pursuit of the one God's mountain. Now they are also divided, and one has more understanding, art, and work than the other, so that they appear more to the world than the right mountain of God; indeed, they consider that they alone are God's dwelling place, please themselves, judge, and persecute all others for the sake of God (as they boast) and the truth.

(49) Therefore here the prophet reproves them, saying, Ye sanctified, many mountains, unbelieving saints of works, why do ye leap? Why do you boast about God and your truth? What do you think much of yourselves? For here is the mountain where God dwells, which you judge and condemn as if it were the devil's mountain; indeed, he will remain on it to the end of the world, as he says in Matt. 28:20, "Behold, I am with you to the end of the world," though you think you will destroy him, but he will remain, and you will pass away.

So we see that he does not call these mountains "fat", but as it is said above [19], "the stubborn remain in the drought", therefore there is no real fruit, they are all sheep's clothing over the wolves [Matth. 7, 15].

V. 18. The chariot of God is twice ten thousand thousand; God is in them with Sinai in holiness.

51) Two things made 1) Christianity unsightly before the Jews. First, that the Christians were few and lowly. Secondly, that the Jews had received God's commandment on Mount Sinai, as they said John 9:28 ff: "We are Moses' disciples, you be his disciple. We know that God spoke to Moses, but where he came from we do not know" 2c.

1) So 1523; original: "machenn."

(52) To this the prophet answers here, saying that there are not few Christians, but more than any man can count. For this certain number, "twice," or more than once ten thousand thousand, according to the Scriptures, signifies a multitude that God, and not a man, can count, since he doubles and multiplies the extreme number, namely a thousand. Although there seemed to be few Christians in the eyes of the Jews, there were many in the eyes of God, since no one knew about them.

And lest they should boast that God is with them, and not with these Christians, he says: "God is in and with them," the same God whom you heard on Mount Sinai, yes, he is in them with Sinai and everything that happened there. For on Mount Sinai the law was given, therefore the same Sinai retains in Scripture the name and figure of the law, as St. Paul proves Gal. 4, 24. 25. Now the Jews received the law at Sinai, and did not have it; therefore God is not with them from Sinai, neither would they hear Him at Sinai, Ex. 20, 19. For the law is not fulfilled by works, but by faith. And not he who works, but he who believes is righteous and saved, Rom. 1, 16. [Cap. 4, 5, 10, 4.] and Marc. 16, 16.

54. If then the prophet will say, Ye think that God of Sinai is with you, but I say, Nay; he is in this his chariot, there is Sinai, there is the law fulfilled, there is the God of Sinai, whom ye would not hear, nor keep his law. Therefore he is not in a bad way in them with Sinai, but in holiness, that is, that they keep God's law by faith inwardly in the heart, and are quite holy thereby. But you have God of Sinai and His law only in outward works, not in faith; therefore God of Sinai and His law are in you with unholiness; outwardly you adorn yourselves, inwardly you defile God of Sinai with His commandment. Summa Summarum, he will not let God of Sinai be, except in the faithful, and not in the works saints. For the law is fulfilled only in faith; there also Sinai wants to be in right holiness.

(55) But why does he call Christendom a chariot, and not so much a host as above [v. 12 ff]? Answer: He

speaks here of Christianity as it is before God. For before the people, when they fight with the world and the devil in faith and the gospel, there 1) is strife and strife, there are armies, there are mountains and hills, there is wisdom and virtue; but before God there is quiet, gentle peace, in a good, happy conscience, within there dwells God, who dwells only in peace, as Ps. 76, 3. says. Therefore God floats and rides there in them, as in a gentle, draped chariot, and rides with one another out of this life into eternal life. For the chariot does not stand still, that is, the Christians daily increase and continue, but in good, quiet peace of conscience.

V. 19: Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast spoiled the spoil, thou hast received gifts into men. Although there are still stubborn ones, that God the Lord dwells here.

This is the main verse of this entire psalm, which St. Paul also refers to in Eph. 4:8. Here it refers to the feast of the Ascension and Pentecost, and is of the opinion: "All the miracles that are mentioned here concerning the gospel and Christianity are due to the fact that you ascended into heaven, for there you received all authority and sent down the Holy Spirit with His gifts, through whom the gospel was preached, 2) the world was converted, and the things mentioned were accomplished.

57) The fact that he ascended to heaven undoubtedly indicates that he first descended into hell, as St. Paul interprets it Eph. 4, 9. Therefore he said, Joh. 16, 7: "If I do not go, the Holy Spirit will not come"; he had to rise from the dead and ascend to heaven before the Holy Spirit would come.

58) But that he says: "You have robbed the robbery" is the opinion: The evil spirit had robbed men of God and led them away into his kingdom of sin and death; then Christ came, as Abraham did Gen. 14:14, 15, and hastened the devil, and brought back all the robbery, and robbed the robber again; so that whoever believes in him shall be eternally free from sin and death and from the devil. This means that Abraham with little

People in the night attacked the enemies, and drove them out to Hoba on the left Damasci; of this much would be said.

Neither does he say, "You have given gifts to men," but "you have received them in men. Which may therefore be understood that he, as St. Peter Apost. 2, 33, that he received such a gift from the Father to give to men. For he did not receive it for himself and in himself alone, but to pour it out into men. As happened on the day of Pentecost and many times after. Let it be said, therefore, that the same 3) Christ who receives and pours out the gifts in heaven also receives them here on earth in men. For what we do in faith Christ has done, and what happens to us has happened to him. But I like the first opinion very much.

(60) Though such public signs and gifts were seen in the disciples of Christ, yet the obstinate Jews would not believe that Christ was Lord and God, and dwelt in his disciples, but they alone wanted to be God's dwelling place. Which is why it is said here that we should not be surprised if not everyone believes us or the Gospel. There remain stubborn, hard heads, whether they already grasp the truth and miracles of God, as happened here with the apostles.

V. 20. Give glory to God all the days, who is burdened with us, this is a God of our blessedness, Sela.

Now he begins to praise and extol such grace and goods, saying: "This is a lovely God, who is worthy to be praised and blessed, that He has taken upon Himself, as His own calamity, all our sin and death, with all our misery, and has overcome them in Himself; this is a God who makes blessed and helps rightly. It is nothing with many laws and works; sin and death will not be 4) eradicated until he has come who is God, and has taken sin upon himself with death and swallowed it up in him; as Paul says 1 Cor. 15, 55.

1) Weimarsche: "daz".

2) "is" 1523; missing in the original.

3) So in the 1523 edition; in the original: "he".

4) "not" is missing in all old individual editions except that of 1523.

For who could make us blessed that would not take away sin and death from us? This was done by this God alone, who burdened Himself with us, carried our burden and destroyed it, so that a God of our salvation became, that is, the one who makes us blessed.

62) The "burden" could also be understood to mean that he redeems us from the law and sins, and henceforth loads us with his light burden and gentle yoke, as he says in Matth. 11, 30: "My burden is light, and my yoke is sweet"; that is, I lay aside sin and conscience (which are unbearable burdens), and only put on a little temporal suffering. But the first opinion pleases me greatly.

V. 21. This God is a God to make us blessed, and has become a Lord God to us, to go out from death.

(63) It would have been in vain if he had so burdened himself with us as to overcome death for him alone; but now he has given us such victory, and has overcome sin and death for us, that we, who were captives under the evil spirit, in sin and death, without the Lord and God, might henceforth have a Lord of our own, a God of our own, who so governs us that through him we might be saved and escape death.

(64) What do all men desire more fervently than to be rid of death? Now this God has become such a Lord and God to us, to go out of death and to become blessed, as all mankind desire, and his rule is nothing else (as this verse says) but to make blessed, and to be a Lord God, to go out of death.

But here we lack faith, that we do not understand his rule. For it seems as if he kills and condemns all who believe in him; he lets them be horribly tortured and put to shame, so that he is to be regarded as the Lord of destruction and the entrance of death. This is done so that such blessedness and death may come about in faith, so that life may be accomplished in death and blessedness in destruction.

66 Therefore he has not put a sleepy word here, saying, "He has become us.

to a LORD GOD the going out of death, or "going out of death". Does not say that we should not die, but that we should go out of death. But if we are to go out of death, we must first come in, that we may go out. So he pushes all of his own into death in the most terrible way, and there he becomes a God and Lord for them to go out of death. That means, one God of beatitude and one Lord of the exit from death. The unbelievers do not want this; therefore they must go to death and stay inside, because they do not have the God of blessedness, nor the Lord of the exit from death. Of them he now says:

V. 22. But God will crush the head of his enemies, the skull with the hair, of those who walk in sin.

It is public enough that the Jews have always been Christ's greatest enemies, although they want to be God's greatest friends; but no one can deny that it has happened to them, as this verse says, that their head is destroyed, they have no kingdom, no dominion, no priesthood anymore, and are always without a head, which, happening soon after Christ's ascension, does not indicate any other iniquity, but that they are Christ's enemies, and do not let Him be God.

68. he calls their authority a "head" and "skull of hair", that is, the beautiful frizzy head. For the Jewish priesthood was a glorious thing, were rich and honored, and are signified by Absalom's beautiful hair [2 Sam. 14, 26]. The head is the highest rank in every nation; the hair on the head is the great Hansen in the same highest rank, who decorate the head with their power, wealth, honor 2c. But now the authority of the Jews is destroyed, the head is shaved; as this is also figured in Isa. 3, 24, where God says that he will give them a bald head for the frizzy hair.

(69) All this is because they will not believe in him who takes away sin and death, but walk and remain in their sins, as he says here, even though they think it is not sin in which they walk. Nor do they themselves acknowledge the guilt, because of which they are so utterly destroyed. For

1) Thus the 1523 edition instead of "in" in the original.

Although they were imprisoned many times before, their heads and authorities, or prophets and priests, have never been so shaven as after Christ's ascension.

v. 23. God said: From Bashan I will convert, I will convert from the depth of the sea.

70 Since the Jews would not receive Christ through the preaching of the apostles, they went into the Gentiles, and there God converted the Gentiles in the place of the Jews. And this is what God declared beforehand, that He would do such a conversion after the destruction of the Jews; as St. Paul also teaches in Romans 11:11, 25.

71 He calls the heath "Bashan" and "depth of the sea". Bashan was a land beyond the Jordan, where King Og ruled in, a great giant, and was mighty [Num. 21, 33. Deut. 3, 11.]. Also "Basan" means in German, fat and thick, which was a fat, mighty empire before others. Now after Christ's ascension the same Basan did not exist; therefore he calls the Gentiles, which had fat, mighty, many, greater kings, before the Roman Empire; and therefore Christ lay with the poor apostles with the great, fat, thick, 1) mighty Hanses, and made Christians of them and among them.

The same, "the depth of the sea" is the same paganism, which he attacked where it was most powerful, namely at Rome and in the Roman Empire, because there the sea is highest and most powerful, because it is deepest. The fatness and depth may well be the great blindness and deep, thick sin of the Gentiles, in which they were educated and accustomed. God has yet converted His own from the depth and height of the sea, that is, from the mightiest of the world; but it cost much blood, as follows:

v. 24. Therefore thou shalt stain thy foot in blood; out of it shall come the tongue of thy dogs from among the enemies.

Who is the foot of Christ? Jeremiah Cap. 2, 24. 25. calls preaching a run. St. Paul also says in Gal. 2, 2. that he had

1) "thick" is omitted in 1523.

walked, that is, preached. And Isaiah, Cap. 52, 7, speaks of the Gospel: "Oh how beautiful are the feet of the preacher on the mountains" 2c. Summa, the foot of Christ is the preaching ministry, with it, and with no other weapons, he attacked the world, ran over it and preached to it. But the ministry has been stained in blood; for many have been martyred before in the Roman Empire and in Rome, but in such a way that it has not been strangled in blood nor perished; nevertheless, however many have been martyred before, it has only been stained in the sight of God, even though it was considered different in the sight of the people.

74 Yes further. Just as Abel after his death first spoke more through his blood and punished his murderer Cain [Gen. 4:10], so also here, when the apostles were martyred and the foot of Christ was stained in blood, Christ first awakened other preachers who punished the murderers and began to bark loudly to lift the gospel higher and higher.

Thus from the blood of the preachers came the tongue of the dogs of Christ, and yet it came not from friends, but from enemies. For Christ converted those who before were hard against the gospel, and afterward became the chief preachers, as Augustine and many others were.

76 And especially the tongue of the dogs, because it is healing, as it is written in the Gospel [Luc. 16, 21] that they licked the wounds of poor Lazaro. These are the preachers who cleanse and heal the wounds of the conscience with wholesome teaching, who take on the infirmities of their neighbor out of brotherly love, of which St. Paul teaches much in Romans 14:1, how to receive the weak in faith and the infirm, and not to reject them. Such teachers come from the blood of the martyrs, who not only bark against the enemies, but are also healing to the weak friends. But now the bishops tear, bite and eat the weak friends, lick and heal the strong enemies. These are the devil's dogs.

v. 25. They have seen, O GOD, your walks, the walks of my GOD, my King in holiness.

77. God's ways are His works, which are all grace and truth, as Ps. 25:10 says: "All God's ways are grace and truth. But this is the great art, that one may know God's work, and 1) let Him work in us, that all our works are God's, and not ours. This means to celebrate the right Sabbath, to rest from our works and to be full of divine works. All this is known and done by faith, which teaches how we are nothing, and our works are also nothing. This is what he means here, that they have seen and known the ways of God, saying "of my God, my King", that is, of Christ, who is our King after mankind, and a God from eternity.

78. But as no one can say, "My God, my King," unless he believes in him, and considers him not only a God and a King, but his God and his King, that he is a God and a King to him and to his blessedness, so no one can know his ways and works without the same faith; faith makes him my God and King, and that all my works are not mine but his. Therefore he adds the little word, "in holiness." For, many call him "my God, my King," and do not go from the heart; therefore there is glitter, deceit and falsehood, which they profane before God. But those who say "my God, my King" in holiness, they say it in truth and in the depth of their heart, these are the true believers.

V. 26. The princes^a) are the foremost with the minstrels, in the midst of the virgins who are cramming.

79 This verse must be spiritual, otherwise what kind of dance would come out of the serious, great things said? But the prophet wanted to indicate that no joy, no playing of strings, no lady gives so much pleasure, as such knowledge of Christ, his graces and works, gives to the conscience. Therefore, here is spiritual string playing, spiritual damsel, spiritual dancing.

80. "The princes" are the apostles, as will follow. "The minstrels" are those who praise God.

1) So 1523; "and" is missing in the original.

a) Marginal gloss: It may also read Hebrew: The singers are the foremost 2c. - This gloss is missing in 1523.

with singing, reading, and preaching, and carrying God's praise to and fro through the Gospel, yes, who also mortify their bodies. The "virgins" are the Christian souls, newly grown in faith, especially the martyrs. Their "kettledrums" are their own bodies, which they mortify and force under the spirit, and thus give a great sound and cry of good life and example to others, so that God alone is praised and preached.

But in all these things the princes shall be first, as the apostles were, that the rest may follow cheerfully with their strings. Otherwise, the gospel, faith and everything would be in vain, if the old Adam's muffle and crucifixion would not follow. Such string playing and drumming is gladly heard by God and angels, and is pleasing to the spiritual ears.

V. 27. In the assemblies God gave the Lord for 3) the well of Israel.

When you come together, as happens at mass, come together in praising God, who has opened to you the living fountain of grace, that is, Christ and his holy gospel, from which all who thirst for grace and blessedness drink eternal life (as he himself says John 4:14). He also commanded at the supper [Luc. 22, 19] that we should celebrate mass in remembrance and praise of him, preaching and signifying his benefits and grace shown to us.

83. he calls it a "fountain of Israel", because it is promised to Israel, since he promised Gen. 12, 3.: "In your seed all families of the earth shall be given." And does this verse probably follow the next. For where there is much mortification of Adam, it is necessary that we hear the word of God many times, and that we be more and more kindled and strengthened, so that we do not grow weary in our work. For where God's word never strengthens, the flesh is soon too strong, and we become too weak, therefore it must be practiced.

So we see that preaching is more important than the mass, because the prophet teaches here, in the assembly of God

2) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers. In the original: "allis".

3) 1523: "around the" as in the Psalter translation of 1524.

Praise to preach, and silence to the mass, without stirring it in the little word "assembly". For all the masses in a heap are of no use without the word of God; although all this is now woefully inverted.

V. 28. There Benjamin the young man is ravished in spirit; the princes of Judah are their stoning, the princes of Zabulon, the princes of Naphtali.

Here he expresses the apostles, whom he called kings and princes before, and says: "All there, that is, in the assemblies where one preaches and mortifies the body, is first Benjamin, that is, St. Paul. Paul, who is the best of the generation of Benjamin, and is rightly called the first of all (although he is a young man, that is, the youngest of the apostles), because he has preached, written, and done more, and has been more enlightened than any of the others. That is why he says here that he was raptured in the spirit, of which he himself writes much in 2 Cor. 12, 2. 4. The other apostles are partly of the family of Judah, as St. Jacob the Less, Simon and Judas, siblings of our Lord Christ. Some from Zabulon and Naphtali, as Peter and Andrew, whom Christ called in the land of Zabulon and Naphtali (Matt. 4:13, 18). But it is a miracle that the prophet St. Peter last of all set it, perhaps to resist the future papists, although it did not help. 1) Behold, these are the princes who were the foremost in the crucified life and spiritual strings; where are they now?

86 But what is that he saith, The princes of Judah their stoning." Some texts have [Vulg.]: The princes of Judah are their dukes or predecessors; but the Hebrew does not give it, that is, "rigmatham"; which word Moses often uses in the third book when he says of stoning. St. Jerome says: The princes of Judah in their purple or silk embroidered garments. I would like to think that there is an opinion that, since the holy scripture is called Galaad, a heap of stones of testimonies [Gen. 31, 47. 48.], that many sayings are gathered in it, so that one testifies to the truth of faith.

that the work of the apostles and their followers is to spiritually stone the Christians, that is, to shower them with sayings of the Scriptures, and to completely kill unbelief in them. For all punishments in the Old Testament mean gracious change into your spirit in the New Testament. This was well understood by David, and all of them were marked with one. For St. Paul, Titus 1:9, wants a bishop to be rich in the Scriptures, so that he may pour them out and shut the mouths of his opponents.

V. 29. O God, give glory to your power! O God, confirm what you have worked in us.

The Hebrew text thus reads: "Territories" or "Your God has commanded your power, and confirm it, O God, which you have wrought in us. 2) And these are the words of the prophet, spoken to Christ, calling him a GOD, and yet the Father his GOD, on the opinion: O Christe, true GOD, thy GOD and thy Father command thy power, and thou, who art also GOD, confirm them.

Here Christ is clearly called one God, and the same work and power are assigned to both. Do not say: Your God command His power, which would also be true, but, Your God command Your power, O God 2c. Christ, our God, works the power in us, and his God shall command it. In the same way Ps. 45, 7. 8. speaks: "Your royal throne, O God, is eternal, and your God has anointed you before all your fellows." Here he also calls Christ a God, and yet says that his God anointed him, when only a man must be anointed by God. That is enough for now.

(89) The opinion is: Until now, all that Christ has done through himself and his apostles has been described. Now he asks that it may continue and be preserved as it began, for which all the apostles, especially Paul, were diligent. And the power is grace or faith in us; which is called the power of God, because it is not of us nor given us by us, but is given us by God, whereby we are strengthened for all good against all evil. Therefore he speaks:

2) In the fuxta Heb, the translation is: praeoepit vsus tuns äo kortituüue tu" sta. (Weim. Ausg.)

1) "has" 1523; missing in the original.

"which thou workest in us," that is, by which power thou workest in and through us, the same is Christ's power, and yet is commanded by the Father.

90. the territories are thus much said: command, provide and decree it 2c. For God does all things with your word, as Ps. 148, 3. [33, 9.] says: "He has said, and it is done; he has commanded, and it is accomplished." So he also wants here that God should only command that Christ's power be confirmed and remain constant in us, which he has begun.

This is also necessary for the sake of false teachers, who lead us out of faith into works, out of God's power into our power, out of grace into free will without ceasing, so that there may not be enough warning and perception, as St. Paul says in 2 Cor. 11:3: "I feared that your faithful minds would be driven mad by the simple mind of Christ, just as Eve was driven mad by the serpent"; and many other such sayings.

V. 30. For the sake of your temple in Jerusalem, the kings will bring you gifts.

92) Here the prophet reads as if he speaks of the bodily temple and gifts, and may well go in a simple mind that kings and princes have given much goods to the church and nourished it, as also Isaiah 49:23 says: "Kings shall be thy nourishers, and queens thy nurses"; and Cap. 60:16: "Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and be suckled with the breasts of kings." This was done in ancient times with the holy bishops, when there was no abuse; but it did not last long. All this was done for the sake of the temple at Jerusalem, that is, for the sake of the Church, which began at Jerusalem and has spread throughout the world. For the temple at Jerusalem was already destroyed when this happened, which must have happened not before but after Christ ascended on high, as the psalm here neatly indicates.

This is not written that the church should be rich, for it [i.e. "the gifts"] should be food, as the words of Isaiah read; but to indicate the power of faith, as God confirms it, so that kings, queens and princes may also come to faith.

and would testify their faith with such gifts to feed the poor in the church. But as the faith is maddened by wicked teachers, so also such goods have come into the most shameful abuse, that no poor man can enjoy them. The prophet also saw this and said:

V. 31. Punish the beast in the reed, the gathering of oxen among the calves of the nations, which reigns in the lovers of silver, and scatter the people who seek to be nearest.

Because kings were supposed to give goods to the church for the sake of Christ, to preserve the poor, this gave the cause of all evil to avarice, and yet it could not be avoided. Therefore, he asks God here to punish the miserly and ambitious, who snatch such goods to them, and only rise high for the sake of good and honor; as now the pope, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks and the same mob is quite furious.

But let us hear how he describes them: First, he calls them a "beast in a reed," because they are beastly men, without any spirit, and lie in the reed, that is, in their own laws of man, which are like the reed, which seems like a rod, and is hollow and empty within; thus the laws of man shine as something, and there is nothing behind it, without the beast grazing under it; "to which" it gives, and is enough for the belly. Therefore Christ says Matth. 11, 7, John Baptist would not be a reed that sways to and fro with the wind.

Now, as the doctrine is, so also the people becomes, also an unstable, empty people, without faith, swaying to and fro, as such teachers only want, as we see that the pope weaves the world with his laws and drives it where he wants. Of this beast in the reed also Job says Cap. 40, 16. and calls such a heap "Behemoth"; says that he likes to lie in the reed, in damp places, that is, in human teachings that do not teach the cross.

After that he interprets himself what "the beast in the reed" is. I mean (he speaks) "the collection of the oxen among the calves.

of the nations", that is, the bishops and preachers in the church, each in his bishopric or parish. For an ox in Scripture is called a preacher or bishop, as St. Paul testifies in 1 Cor. 9:9, and the cows or calves are such preachers' people. Therefore he speaks, "Among the calves of the people." As if he should say: I speak in a hidden sense of calves, which are people. But he indicates that there will be many of these cattle and oxen, and that the whole church will have them, in that he does not say "the oxen," but "the collection of oxen," and not "the calves of one people," but "of many peoples.

98 Now this is not the complaint that they are many, but that they, of whom there are so many, are all beasts of burden and mighty oxen among the people, filling the world with the doctrine of men, destroying the gospel, ruling by force; and all this for the sake of shameful temporal goods. For the word "Abirim" means not only oxen, but also strong, mighty, great people; for God also is called "Abir" in Scripture for the sake of his power. Now this thing we see all before our eyes exuberantly.

99. Further he says: The reed and the oxen go along in his regiment, so that all his own are moneybags and silver-seeking spirits. Is this not also before your eyes? Who is in the pope's sect or practices the laws of men but for the sake of money and the belly? The clergy has long been more miserly than avarice itself, so that a public saying has arisen about it. Name me a cardinal, a bishop, a priest, a monk, who would remain in his office for the sake of God, and how long he would stay inside, if there were no food, enjoyment or money. Therefore he says that the beast rules in the money addicts and lovers of silver, so that they may not become full.

The fourth: "Scatter the peoples who seek to be next. These are those who want to sit on top, pope, cardinals, bishops, become spiritual for the sake of honor. Behold, how finely the prophet has seen all these beings before. 1) He puts here a little word "Kraboth", that is, the sewing; Moses often uses it,

1) In the original: "fursehen".

When he speaks of the priesthood and sacrifice, it is because the priests, if they were to sacrifice, had to draw near to God. Therefore, he is actually speaking here of those who approach the spiritual state and God's service; and if he had had to speak roughly in German in this verse, he would certainly have spoken in this way: O God, punish all those who press to become popes, bishops, cardinals, priests, monks, and do not wait to be forced or called. For they certainly seek only honor and good, food, drink and good days, and become oxen, tyrants among the people, and devise only laws of men to curb your gospel; to which end they are caused to see goods at the church, given by kings to receive the nuns. Punish, punish, punish, punish, dear Lord God, punish, Christianity is going down because of it! They are wicked finches. Behold, now you see what the prophet thinks of the papacy and papists.

V. 32. The messages from Egypt will come, Moorland will run to God with his hands.

The previous verse the prophet has stretched before this, according to the rule per anticipationem, so that when he said about the church goods, he did not want to forgive the abuse of them, although it happened according to this verse content. For these Egyptian messages are certainly the holy fathers in the desert, St. Anthony, Macarius and many more; in addition Alexandria, there has been a great school of Christianity before all the elders of the world. Also Mohrenland abuts the same Egypt, and many of the same fathers have been in Mohrenland; these are the messages that teach and preach God's word in Egypt, who are chosen from Egypt to preach there. But they came where? "To God," as he says of the Moors:

102. "Moorland will run to God with its hands", that is, they will not run across field 2) for Christ is in all places, but remain in their country, and yet run to God with the deed and life that are their hands; just as the messages from

2) In the original: "ubirfelt".

Egypt, but are chosen out of Egypt, and are God's messengers within. For whoever teaches, "Here or there is Christ," is a deceiver, Matth. 24, 23. 24. That coming and going is spiritual, as Christ says Matth. 8, 11: "Many will come from going out and coming down to sit in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. 2c. For one comes to God with the spirit and by the hands, that is, not with the tongue and words, but with action and truth. Now, in no place in the world have so freshly done to come to God as the dear fathers in the deserts of Egypt and Moorland; as is well known.

V. 33: All the kingdoms of the earth, sing to God, play psalteries to the Lord. Sela.

This is that all the world shall be subject to Christ, and shall know him, and praise him, as it is promised in the second Psalm, v. 8: "I will give thee the heathen for an inheritance, and thy possession shall be throughout all the earth. He is never bound to One place at Jerusalem, so in all the kingdoms of the earth shall be His praise, service and people. For when He was at Jerusalem alone, the Jews were not permitted to serve Him or sing to Him apart from Jerusalem, as the 137th Psalm, v. 4, testifies: "How shall we sing the praises of God in foreign lands?" And [in] many more places of the prophets it is touched upon that at Jerusalem alone was God's service. But now her head is destroyed and Christ has gone to heaven, in all places, all times, all persons God's service is abolished, all distinction of place, time, persons, garments, food, works, and all that is external; without the pope at Rome having again made distinction of the same, so that Christianity is disturbed to the ground. Therefore, this verse frees God's service, detaches it from Jerusalem, and divides it to all the world, which the Jews do not want to believe.

V. 34. To him who sails in the heaven of all heavens from the beginning. Behold, he will give his voice a voice of power.

104. in the time of the Jews, they called god "hovering over cherubim" or "over Jerusalem", which god had chosen for his dwelling place; all devotion had to go there.

and the attention of all the saints, so that even Daniel in Babylon, when he prayed, turned toward Jerusalem [Dan. 6:10]. But now, after Christ's ascension, all this is finished, there is no longer a fleshly place, no more cherubim; but we serve Him, and cling to Him who hovers and rides above all heavens; that in all the world He may be served, where heaven extends above us; that everything may be free to serve God, as free as heaven is, the throne of Him whom we serve, yes, in the heaven of all heavens, that the angels also may serve Him, and show equal service with us to Him. For the service of angels is not bound to outward things, so also not the service of Christians; both serve spiritually. 1)

(105) But it is not another new God that the Jews have had over their cherubim; he has been hovering in the heaven of all heavens from the beginning. For the angels have always served him in this way, even the first fathers, Adam, Noah, Abraham, until Moses, who served no god but over the cherubim or in Jerusalem. So, where they came 2) it was the same for them; for God did this for the Jews for a time, that he promised to hover over Jerusalem and over the cherubim, until Christ came, for the sake of the law, and many other causes, of which it is not necessary to say now.

So we see that these two verses are strict against the doctrine and laws of men, which follow when the silver-minded and ambitious come into power, and bind worship to chapels, monasteries, churches, altars, bells, garments, vessels, tables, plates, eating, drinking, sleeping, and the like outward things, such as the reed, the papist sect, being now going, against which St. Paul warned us so many times about this prophet 3).

107) When God's service is thus free, cherubim and human law removed, then He gives His voice, "the holy gospel", 4) that it be "a voice of power", that is, that it then goes forth in the swing un-

1) In the original: both serve spiritually.

2) So 1523; original: "heym".

3) In the original: "vor warnet".

4) Instead of the speech marks we put, the old editions have brackets, which were also used for emphasis at that time, because there were no speech marks.

He then does what is his nature and power, and expresses the voice. For the gospel is not to be written alone, but rather to be preached with a bodily voice; thus it comes into a pregnancy, and goes forth and lives among the people. For this power of the voice is not that of striking enemies or protecting oneself, but the natural ability of every thing, as it is said, "Wine has power to make merry. So the gospel has its power, and works after its kind, and makes all things free, if the doctrines of men do not hinder them with their assumed, exquisite works and outward ways.

V. 35. Pray the power of God over Israel; His greatness and power are in the clouds.

Here he calls him again a God over Israel; that is, as if he bound him again to person and place. But the previous verses force that Israel must be spiritual here, as St. Paul Gal. 6, 16. calls Israel Dei, God's Israel, not the physical Israel. Also so the Scripture elsewhere calls him a GOtt Israel. Here he says: "For GOD is over Israel", and reads on the opinion (my opinion): You Jews want to have GOD alone, and yet you are not under him; he cannot come over you. If you want to be Israel, that he may be a God over you, do this: give him power; confess that it is not your work but his grace that makes you strong, righteous and blessed; despair of yourselves; consider and surrender to him; see, then he will be a God over Israel; otherwise you are not Israel. For such an Israel he wants now, which does not build on itself, but on him and his grace. Therefore the meaning of the verse is: "Give power to God over Israel", that is, make him a God over Israel; this you do when you ascribe power and all ability to him.

109] "And his power is in the clouds," that is, he rules with no bodily force, as you wait; all that he does he does through the evangelists and his word, which are his clouds, through which he rains good doctrine, flashes with miraculous signs, thunders with thunderbolts. See to it that you are not offended by these little ones; do not look for his power elsewhere, nor wait for it.

All things are in faith and in his word; nothing will be otherwise. Now the clouds are also free; his power and his work are no longer in Jerusalem under the roof of the temple, as before; in all places of the world are the clouds, there you will find his power and his work, that he may help and save.

V. 36. God is terrible in his saints; he is the God of Israel, he is the one who gives strength and power to the people. Glory be to God. Amen.

(110) Then he insinuates the Psalm, saying that although the clouds and its Christians are contemptible in the eyes of the world, it is such a great thing that God is in them, works and reigns, that for this reason everyone should be astonished and fear them with great honor, as they are God's holy place and dwelling. For the word "saints" here means holy place or dwelling, which in the New Testament are the holy Christians, since God no longer dwells in cities and houses as in the Old Testament, and they are sanctified much more deliciously than Solomon's temple, namely, with the Holy 1) Spirit Himself and living ointment of divine grace, and whoever touches them touches the apple of God's eye [Zech. 2:8]. This is said to us for comfort, that we may not fear persecution; for they do it to God, who is terrified at what they do to us, who are contemptible before them.

(111) "He is the God of Israel," that is, we have no other God than the God of Israel. It is Christ whom Israel had, of whom we now also say: it is he who does these things, who is now not only Israel's God, but the God of all the world. No one is able to stand against the evil of himself, but it is he alone who gives power and strength to all the people, that is, to all those who are strong and sturdy, so that he alone may be the one who is given and who is God. This he is called, *Benedictus Deus*, which [is], as St. Paul says, 2 Cor. 10:17, "He that boasteth, let him boast of GOD." 2) Amen.

1) "Heiligen" is missing in the Jenaer; thereafter also in Walch and in the Erlanger.

2) 1523 edition: "Gottes"; original: aufGott.

Lastly, we have had the little word "sela" three times, which one does not use to read in the Psalter. Some think that 1) it is left over in the Psalms, but do not yet know what it means.

But I think it is a sign of the Spirit, that where it is written in the Psalter, it means to keep still and to pay close attention, as if the Spirit were moving or delighting someone to look at something well; but I leave each one here to his own discretion.

1) In the original: My quite a few.

20. short interpretation of the 76th psalm. *)

1. to sleep means here, as one says in the field, to despair, to become cowardly, to be frightened. When a man becomes a coward, his hands tremble, his legs shake, his head droops so that he can neither hold a spear nor a sword, much less fight or defend himself. He is not dead, nor is he alive, but, like a sleeping man, he can do nothing, and often cannot flee, for he is frozen. Such a warrior is God; [if] 2) he takes away the heart, the man is gone; as he did with Pharaoh, Sanherib, Benhadad, and many more. So it is also now, that one may learn to fear God, when he is not well pleased with him. He leaves you the spear, the sword, the cannon and the armor, but he takes away the heart; so hand and spear, horse and man sink into such a sleep, as the psalm sings here.

[Take courage.

2 The Hebrew cannot be spoken here in German; I wanted to give it in Latin: *Vindemiati ferociam principum*. I must form a little the thoughts of the prophet, so it can be understood. The Scripture calls a country or people "vineyard", like Is. 5, 1., Jer. 12, 10,

2) Added by us.

as Matth. 21, 33. Christ also shows. "Grape harvester" here means the enemies who harvest the vineyard, that is, who plunder and rob the land, Obadiah 1, 5. Joel 1, 7. Ps. 80, 9ff. As now the Commissarius of the old religion (as they call it) of the devil and Pabst's army commander, thought, he wanted to read the vineyards to the Churfürsten, duke Moritzen and landgrave. The cities in Thuringia, Meissen, Hesse, Naumburg, Zeitz 2c. would have been delicious vines and grapevines for him, could have cut good grapes and made him a rich autumn. Against this, God said in the Council of Guardians to protect his word and honor: If thou wilt gather wine, I will come before thee, and gather thy courage, and make such a harvest of thee, that there shall not remain unto thy courage one cluster of grapes, nor berry, nor leaf, but heaven and earth shall be made narrow. That is Hebrew Bazar ruach, read the courage. Which we must have German "den Muth nehmen", because "den Muth lesen" does not read with the German man. But it is mockingly spoken against "the mountains of robbery" [v. 5], who do not think that if they want to read wine and plunder, God can first read and plunder their proud courage. Such mockery can be done by faith in Christ from the beginning and always. Joh. 14, 12: "He who believes in me will do the works that I do.

*This short interpretation is found (as Walch, old edition, vol. IV, Vorr. p. 29b reports) in a book in the Gothaische Bibliothek, which has the title: "Vermanung an Churfürsten zu Sachsen und Landgrafen zu Hessen von dem gefangenen Herrn zu Brunswig, samt dein 64. und 76. Psalm, Wittenberg 1546." This writing is after the first edition of 1545, in which the Psalms are missing, printed in Walch, old edition, vol. In our brief interpretation we now encounter strong echoes of this writing, namely "Benhadad" (Z 6 f. Walch I. o., Col. 1756 f.), "Pharaoh" and "Sanherib" (ibick. § 35); the designation of Heinrich von Braunschweig as "Commissarius of the old religion" (idül. § 7, § 28 z. E.? 31 z. A.). Therefore, there can hardly be any doubt that our interpretation is not already to be placed (like the 64th Psalm in its application to Heinrich (Walch, alte Ausg., Bd. XVII, 1729 ff.) in the year 1542, where all editions place it, but in the year of Heinrich's capture, 1545. In the collections: Wittenberger (1559), vol. XII, p. 399; Altenburger, vol. VIII, p. 997; Leipziger, vol. VI, p. 271 and in the Erlanger. We reproduce the text according to the Wittenberger, but omit the psalm, which does not differ in anything from the text of the Bible.

21. interpretation of the 82nd Psalm.*)

Anno 1530.

[A Psalm Assaph.]

1. God stands in the community of God, and is judge among the gods.

How long will you judge unrighteousness and prefer it to the wicked? Sela.

3. judge the poor and the fatherless, and help the wretched and the needy to justice.

4. save the poor and lowly, deliver him from the hand of the wicked.

(5) But they know nothing and respect nothing; they walk in darkness. All the foundations of the land must fall.

(6) I have well said, Ye are gods, and all the children of the Most High.

007 But ye shall die as men, and fall as one among princes.

8. arise, God, and judge the land, for you inherit among all the nations.

Preface.

1. In times past, when popes, bishops, priests and monks had such a regime that they could force and drive kings and princes with small banners wherever they wanted, without any resistance or opposition; Indeed, kings and princes were not allowed to harm a hair on the head of a monk or a priest, as the same breadworm was, but they had to suffer that even on the pulpit a rough ass could outflank kings and princes, and atone for his lust for them with all his might. And such things still had to be preached, so that no one was allowed to rebel against them. And the secular authorities were completely under the spiritual giants and tyrants, that such

The people of the city were so powerful that some of the canons prevailed. So powerfully prevailed the one canon: Si quis suadente etc.. For this there was no understanding nor instruction as to what secular authority was, and how far it was separated from the spiritual regiment. Therefore, the secular lords knew nowhere to take revenge on the clergy, except that they were out of all measure hostile to them, spoke evil after them, and, where they could, showed secret treachery, or saw through their fingers that others did it.

2. But now that the gospel has come to light and makes a clear distinction between the secular and the spiritual state, and teaches that the secular state is a divine order that everyone should obey and honor, they are happy to be free, and the ecclesiastical tyrants have to pull in the pipes, and the game is immediately reversed, that now again pope, bishops, clergy and monks have to fear and honor the princes and lords and the nobility, give and give, fast and celebrate, and worship almost like their gods at their feet. Oh, this tickles them so well that they do not even know how wantonly they want to abuse such graces and freedom. And yet they pursue the gospel (through which they have become such gods and lords over the clergy) for appearance's sake, as if they wanted to protect and defend the clergy. But woe to the protection that comes so dear to the clergy that life and limb would hurt them over it, even though what happens to them is right.

(3) Above this, in order that they may give more thanks to the gospel, they will henceforth also give thanks to the Lord.

*This text was published in Wittenberg by Nickel Schirlentz in 1530 under the title: "Der HXXII. Psalm, Ausgelegt. Mart. Luther. Wittenberg itlVXXX.", and was reprinted in the same year in Nuremberg by Georg Wachter. In the collective editions, this writing is found: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. III, p. 406d; in the Jena (1566), vol. V, p. 147d; in the Altenburg, vol. V, p. 277; in the Leipzig, vol. VI, p. 271 and in the Erlangen, vol. 39, p. 224. As early as September 1530, a Latin translation by Vincentius Obsopous was published by Johannes Secerius in Hagenau in one volume, which also contained an interpretation by Joh. Agricola of the Epistle to Titus and a cksispositio orntonis by Melanchthon of the Epistle to the Romans. In 1531, Jnstus Jonas at Wittenberg published a Latin translation made by him under the title: Lnarratio xsalini TXXXII. The latter is included in the Latin Wittenberg edition (1549), tom. III, iol. 538d. We reproduce the text according to the Erlanger, which brings the original print, comparing the Wittenberg, the Jena and the Latin.

not suffering that the same should punish their unrighteousness and willfulness, have now brought up a new little matter, and pretend that whoever punishes them is rebellious, and rebels against the authorities, ordained by God, and speaks to their honor. So, because they are free from the tyranny of the clergy, and cannot be punished by them, they now want to be free from the gospel (which has set them free) and unpunished, and finally, so that they can do everything they desire without hindrance and unpunished, without shyness and fear, and with honor and glory, so that they may become the noble, praiseworthy people, as St. Peter 2 Ep. 3, 3. Peter 2. Ep. 3, 3. of 1) says: "At the last time scoffers will come, who live according to their will, and do what they please" 2c., which now goes by force.

4) Such little disciples were also among the Jewish people, as this 82nd Psalm indicates, who also had for themselves the saying of Moses, 2 Mos. 22, 8. 9. where he calls the overlords and judges gods, and says: "If a matter cannot be decided, one should bring both parts before the gods", that is, before the judges 2c. They used this saying as a cover of shame and as a protection of their evil, against the preachers and prophets, and wanted to be punished by them, boasted against their 2) punishment and preaching, and struck them before the head with this saying: Wilt thou punish us and teach us? Do you not know that Moses calls us gods? You are a rebel, you speak against God's order, and you preach too close to our honor. You shall listen to us, learn from us, 3) and let us punish you. Shut up, or you will be punished. All the same, as the same squires Ps. 12, 5. also say: "It behooves us to speak, who is it that will be our lord?" Item, in the 11th Psalm, v. 3: "What should the righteous do to us?" And in the 4th Psalm, v. 7. "Who is he that should show us better things?" And in many more places; as if they should say, We suffer no master nor punisher; we are the gods, we shall be heard 2c. Against such Junker this Psalm is made and speaks:

V. 1. God stands in the community of God and is judge among the gods.

5. he does not confess or deny that they are gods, does not want to be rebellious, nor to weaken their honor or authority, as the disobedient, rebellious people do, or as the mad saints, the heretics, and the fanatics do, but makes a proper distinction between God's authority and their authority. He wants them to be gods over men, but not over God Himself. As if he should say: It is true, you are gods over all of us, but not over all of our God. For God, who has set you up as gods, does not want to have thrown himself and his deity under your deity, and does not let you be gods for that reason, so that he should no longer remain God; but he wants to remain supreme, a judge over all gods.

Moses calls them gods for the reason that all offices of authority, from the lowest to the highest, are God's order, as St. Paul teaches Rom. 13, 1. And King Jehoshaphat in the 2nd book of Chronicles [Cap. 19, 6.] says to his officials: "Watch, and judge rightly; for judgment is of God." Because it does not come from human will or authority, but God Himself establishes and maintains all authority, and where He no longer holds it, it all falls away, even if all the world adheres to it, therefore it is called a divine thing, divine order, and such persons are also called divine, divine or gods, especially where the divine word and command also comes about the establishment, as in the people of Israel the priests, princes, kings were appointed by oral command and word of God.

(7) From this we can see how high and glorious God wants the authorities to be, that people should be obedient to them as His officials, as well as to Himself, and be subject to them with fear and all honor. For whoever will set himself against, or disobey, or despise those whom God Himself calls by His name, and calls them gods, and hangs his honor on them, that whoever despises them, disobeys them, or sets himself against them, despises and disobeys them, and at the same time sets himself against the right supreme God, who is in them and speaks and judges through them, and is called their judgement.

1) So the Wittenberg and the Jena; "von" is missing in the Erlanger. Jonas: Ue Huo.

2) Erlanger: the same. The Wittenbergers and the Jenaers have our reading.

3) Erlanger: "teach".

His judgment? What they gain from this is shown by St. Paul, Rom. 13, 2, and experience also shows abundantly.

(8) And all this is written because God wants to establish and maintain peace among Adam's children, for their own benefit, as St. Paul says in Romans 13:4: "She is God's servant, for your benefit. For where there is no authority, or where it is without honor, there can be no peace for me; where there is no peace, there remains no food, and neither can live or keep anything from the other's iniquity, thievery, robbery, violence and vice. Thus, there will be much less room to teach God's word and to train children in the fear of God and in discipline. Because God does not want the world to be desolate and empty, but has created it for people to live in and work and fill the land, as Genesis 1:26, 28. and all this cannot happen where there is no peace, he is forced, as a creator, to maintain his own creature, work and order, that he must appoint and maintain authorities, and command them with the sword and laws, that they should kill and punish all who disobey them, as they also strive against God and his order and are not worthy of life.

(9) But again, as on this side he resists the discord of the mob, and therefore casts them under the sword and laws, so also on the other side he resists the authorities, that they should not abuse such majesty and authority for their will, but for peace, for which it is established and maintained by him. But so far that he will not allow the mob to raise their fist against them, or to take up the sword, as if they wanted to punish and judge the authorities. No, they shall refrain from doing so; God will not and has not commanded them to do so. Therefore they shall not be judges themselves, nor avenge themselves, nor do iniquity and violence; but He Himself, God, will punish the wicked authorities, and set and establish laws or rights for the authorities; He will be judge and master over them, He will find them well, better than anyone else can find them; as He has done from the beginning of the world.

10 This is what this first verse says: "God is standing in the community of God, and is

Judge among the gods." As if to say: Let no one dare to judge, punish, or master the gods, but be quiet, keep peace, be obedient, and suffer. Again, the gods are not to be proud and wanton, for they are not gods in the mob and overlords of the congregation, as if they were alone and wanted to do as they pleased. No, not so; but God Himself is also there, and will judge, punish and rule them; and where they disobey, they shall not escape. "He standeth in his congregation"; for the congregation is also his. Again, he judges the gods; for the authorities are his also.

(11) Because they are both his, he takes care of both of them, and wants to be respected and feared by both of them, so that the congregation will be obedient to the authorities for the sake of God; and the authorities will act justly and peacefully, also for the sake of God, so that things will go well in this life, in the fear and obedience of God. Which part, however, will not do its part, but if the congregation is disobedient and the authorities wanton, they shall both be guilty of death before God and shall be punished; the congregation by the authorities, the authorities by God, who can put down the rulers from the throne and cut off their root by name and memory, as the examples well indicate.

(12) Notice that he calls all the churches or ordinary assemblies of God communities, as they are God's own, and he takes care of them as his own work, just as he calls Jonah 1:3, Nineveh also a city of God. For he created all the churches, and creates [and] also brings them together, nourishes, increases, blesses and sustains them, gives them fields, meadows, cattle, water, air, sun and moon, and everything they have, even body and life, as Gen. 1, 29. says. For what do we and all the world have that we do not take from him without ceasing?

(13) But even though experience should teach us this, he must also say this with few words, and publicly confess and boast that the churches are his. For the foolish, clever reason, together with all the wise men of the world, know nothing at all that a church is God's creature and order.

but does not think otherwise, that it is possible for a people to keep together and live with each other, just as murderers, robbers and other evil groups (which are the congregations of the devil) throw themselves together to disturb the peace and God's order. But the believers, who know the article of creation from Genesis 1, believe this, even though weakly, and never think or speak much about it. David, however, knows it almost well, since he speaks Ps. 24, 1. 2.: "The earth is the LORD's, and they that dwell therein; for he hath founded it upon the seas, and built it upon the waters." And his son Solomon in the 127th Psalm, v. 1. 2.: "Where God does not keep house and city, there build and keep in vain, both builder and keeper." Now what should the worldly wise know about heavenly things, who do not know such things, in which they live and float.

14 Since such churches are God's work, as He creates, nourishes and increases them daily, so that they sit at home, beget and raise children, this word is first of all a great, sweet comfort to all who find themselves sitting in such a church, for they are certain that God takes care of them as His work and creature, cares for them and also protects and nourishes them. As can also be seen in the deed. For who could have or keep a cow or a penny if God did not give, help and care for it? And from this every one should admonish himself to be thankful for such glorious freedom, and to be all the more willing and obedient to everything that is commanded him by his authorities, and to be glad that in such a community he is worthy to eat bread and to live. For this word "God's community" is a precious word, and whoever finds himself in it would be ten times better than if he were written in the Roman community, which was a great, glorious thing on earth, but reason does not respect it.

(15) Secondly, it is also a terrible word of warning against the wicked, wanton gods or authorities; for they must hear here that they are not set over wood and stone, not over swine and dogs (of which God has no authority), but over God's congregation, and are afraid that they will go against God Himself.

Where they do wrong, they do wrong. For the churches are not as their own as swine and dogs, which God has freely given to them for their own, but he is and will also be in them, and shall be called his church. So that everything on both sides may be done in the fear of God and humility, so that the subjects may look to God and be gladly obedient for His sake; and the authorities may also look to God and keep justice and peace for His sake.

16) But especially such fear and humility towards one another should be in the church, which was not only founded and created from the word of Genesis 1, but which is also confirmed and ordained by the special word of God. As the congregations of the people of Israel were manifoldly confirmed by Moses and chosen and set apart above all others, of which this Psalm also speaks primarily, and calls them above all others God's congregations, as those called His inheritance, His possession, His kingdom, His priesthood in all the prophets. Although in the same congregations of God there were the most angry and furious gods, and the most wanton, proud and rebellious 1) people than they could be on earth; as this Psalm well shows, and the histories well testify.

17 These are also our authorities in the faithful testament, all of which are also confirmed by Christ anew with special words, as he says Matth. 22, 21: "Pray to Caesar what is Caesar's", and 1 Petr. 2, 13. and Rom. 13:1: "Let every man be subject to his rulers"; and much more of Proverbs, that henceforth this Psalm concerns our rulers as well as the Jews, just as all the other Scriptures of the Old Testament are henceforth given to us as well as to the Jews. Therefore also in our churches such fear and humility, both of gods and of subjects, should be the more abundant. But it will also remain with us and even go, as this psalm sings, which says nothing good of the gods and their virtues.

18. so that the same proud gods

1) Erlanger: "stirring up"; Jonas: seäitiosissimiis popntiis.

If they are deprived of glory and defiance, thinking that no one should judge them or punish them, or that they should be called rebellious, a stake is put in front of them and the shillelagh is put by your dog, so that they should be punished severely, confidently, and severely punished, as this psalm does. For he speaks here: "God stands in his congregation and judges the gods," that is, he punishes them. For he retains the supremacy and judgment over them, and does not make them gods in such a way that he would abolish his deity with them, and let them do as they please, as if they alone were God above God, but he wants to have them subject to his word; they shall hear this, or else they shall have all misfortune. It is enough that they otherwise have authority over all, but over God's word they shall not. For the word of God establishes and makes them gods, and puts all things under them; therefore they shall not pass over the same, which is their instigator and founder, but shall be subject unto it, and shall be judged, punished, created, and governed by it.

(19) Yes, where is God? Or, how can we be sure that God is the one who reproves and punishes like this? Answer: You hear here, "that he stands in the church. Where his church is, there you will find him, for there he has appointed his priests and preachers, whom he has commanded to teach, admonish, punish, comfort, and in sum, to practice the word of God. Where God's word is commanded, God's office is to punish. But how the word of God is commanded to be preached in all the world and in all places, I must not tell here, because I think one can see the church and preaching stands before one's eyes, which are all standing on the ground, Matth. 28, 19. 20.: "Go and preach to all the Gentiles, and teach them to keep what I have commanded you." Would to God that there were faithful people who held such an office and carried it out faithfully and honestly and, alas, did not abuse it so shamefully and harmfully. But abuse does not destroy the office, the office is still right; just as the secular authority remains a right, good office, even if a knave has it and abuses it.

20. but notice that such a preacher, by whom God punishes the gods, should "stand

in the community". He should "stand", that is, be firm and confident, act sincerely and honestly against them 1); and "in the community", that is, publicly, freely, before God and men. Thus two vices are degenerated; the first is called unfaithfulness. For many bishops and preachers are now in the preaching ministry, but they do not stand and serve God faithfully, but lie or otherwise play their jokes. These are now the lazy and useless preachers who do not tell the princes and lords their vices. Some because they do not respect it at all. Such lie and snore in their office, do nothing that belongs to their office, without filling the room like swine, where otherwise good preachers should stand. This is the great multitude. But some hypocrites and flatterers, and strengthen the evil gods in their will, as they now rage and rage against the gospel, and incite and provoke their princes and lords to blaspheme and murder 2c. Some also fear the skin, fearing they must lose life and property over it. All these do not stand, and are not faithful to Christ.

Twenty-one: The other vice is called "after-talking. For the whole world and every corner is full of people, both preachers and laymen, who from time to time speak evil after their gods, that is, their princes and lords, and curse and reproach them, but not freely in public, but in corners, and among their groups. But this does nothing but make things worse; it serves no purpose except to set a secret fire, so that the people are incited to disobedience, rebellion, discord and contempt for the authorities. But if you are in office, and do not want to punish your gods publicly and in private (as your office demands), then also let your secret after-talk, scolding, judging and complaining, or do not have a good year. If you are not in office, let your punishments and judgments be public and secret, or the devil is already your abbot and must not become one. For God has forbidden secret judging, or if there is no office, Matth. 7, 1. ff., and wants those who are in office and called to it, that they should freely punish and judge their gods publicly.

t) "Sie" is missing in the Erlanger, but is in the Wittenberger and in the Jenaer.

2) So the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers; Erlanger: you are.

22 Therefore also here the first verse says further: "He is judge among the gods." "Judge is he, and punisheth the gods; but he doeth it as a judge that hath command and office to do it, and doeth it not as an assassin and a hypocrite in the corner among the rods, but among the gods themselves, he may freely tell them in their sight. He does not say, "He is a blasphemer or an afterreader," but "a judge among the gods. Mark this well. For because the overlords sit highest, everyone sees and hears their vices and faults most of all; and because they are seen most of all, there is no common vice but to speak evil of the overlords. And this is what everyone does most gladly, because he forgets his own evil; and even if all virtue were otherwise in its master, and they can see only one evil and fault, like a splinter, while they are full of evil beams, the splinter is still seen in the height of all virtues, and the beams are not seen in the deep basic soup of all evil.

(23) Now then, this first verse shows that it is not seditious to punish the authorities when it is done in the way mentioned here, namely, that it is done publicly, freely and honestly by divinely commanded authority and by the word of God; but it is a praiseworthy, noble, strange virtue, and a special, great service of God, as the Psalm proves here. That would be rather seditious, where a preacher does not punish the vices of the authorities. For in so doing, he makes the mob angry and unwilling, and strengthens the wickedness of the tyrants, and makes himself guilty of all of them, for which God would be angry and cause a plague. Otherwise, where the lords are punished as well as the mob, and the mob as well as the lords (as the prophets do), neither can put anything on the other, and must suffer with each other and take it for good, and be content with each other.

(24) For these are poisonous and dangerous preachers, who take a part alone before them, scolding the lords, that they may tickle the rabble, and court the peasant, as the Muenzer, Carlstadt, and other enthusiasts do; or again, scolding the rabble alone, that they may

and serve well, as our adversaries do. But it is said that both parts are hewn into one pot and made into one dish, one as well as the other. For the preaching office is not a servant of the court or of the peasants; it is God's servant and bondservant, and its command goes over lords and bondservants, 1) as the Psalm says here, it judges and punishes the gods. And this is also what the word *judicat* means, judges, *scilicet* *judicio et jure*, that he does it as it is due and right; not according to his own favor or disfavor, but according to the law, that is, according to God's word, which respects neither difference nor respect of person.

V. 2. How long will you judge unjustly and prefer the wicked person? Sela.

(25) These three verses, and indeed the whole psalm, should be painted by every prince in his chamber, on his bed, above the table, and also on his clothes. For therein they find how high, princely, noble virtue their rank can practice, that indeed worldly authority, after the office of preaching, is the highest service of God and most useful office on earth. Which should ever comfort and stimulate a lord to lead his estate with joy, and to practice such virtue in it. For how can they be praised more highly than that they are called and are gods, and that the works and virtues of their office are not only princely or royal, nor only angelic, but divine virtues?

26 Again, they find how ungodly, unprincipled, even inhuman, and vilely devilish iniquity they commit, and are the most pernicious people on earth, where they leave such their office and virtue, and do the contradiction, that they may be called not gods, but devils, as they certainly are, though they sit in the office of gods, and use the name in vain.

27 Now let us see one by one what great virtues they can do. The first is that they can establish justice for the godly and control the wicked, as he says: "How long will you judge unjustly and prefer the wicked to yourselves? Who

1) Jonas: Mrvos. Erlanger: Servant.

but can count how many rich virtues and benefits follow from this few first virtues? For where God's word is protected and handled, that it is freely taught and learned, and no room is given to the rotten and false doctrines, or is not helped over against the God-fearing teachers, what greater treasure can there be in the land? God must dwell there as in his own temple. Many kings and princes have founded great, glorious churches and built temples. And if a king could build a church of pure gold or of precious emeralds and rubies, what would all such great, glorious things be compared to a right, pious, God-fearing pastor or preacher? He can help many thousands of souls, both to eternal life and in this life. For he can bring them to God through the Word, and make of them competent, skillful people, serving God honestly, and also salutary and useful to the world. But a church or temple cannot make a man like that; indeed, it cannot help anything anywhere, but stands there and lets it help and adorn itself.

But who is he? And where are the eyes that may see such virtue in a lord or prince? It shines and glitters nothing, and is a very small thing to look at, to nourish or protect a poor, pious priest or preacher; but to build a jam church, to give golden jewels, to serve the dead stones and wood, that glitters, that shines, that is called royal, princely virtues. Let it shine, let it shine; but my unglamorous priest does the virtue of increasing God's kingdom, filling heaven with saints, plundering hell, robbing the devil, warding off death, controlling sin; Then he instructs the world, and comforts every man in his station, preserves peace and unity, raises up fine young people, and plants all kinds of virtue in the people; and in short, he creates a new world, and builds not a perishable, wretched house, but an eternal, beautiful paradise, where God Himself delights to dwell.

29. all these things can be made a part of by a pious prince or lord who nourishes or protects such a priest; indeed, it is the entire

The priest could not remain without his protection and expense, so no gold mountain or silver mountain in any country can compare with this treasure. Therefore, no mountain of gold or silver in any country can be compared to this treasure. But blessed must be the eyes that know such things; yes, also blessed the fists that can do such things.

(30) The other virtue, that they help the wretched orphans and widows to justice and promote their causes. But who can tell all the virtues that follow from this virtue? For this virtue comprehends all works of righteousness, as that a ruler, lord, city, have good rights and manners, and that all things be well ordered, and also be kept above them in all estates, trades, crafts, transactions, services, works, lest it be called *populus sine lege*, a people without rights. For where there are no rights, there are poor people, widows, orphans, there is no farmer so low, he can make a valuation; and then applies with buying, selling, inheritance, lending, paying, borrowing, and the like nothing else, because who can throw the other over the rope, rob or steal, rob; and all this over the poor, over widows and orphans most. Who can now calculate what these alms are, which such a lord does without ceasing? For with this he not only feeds the parish priest (of which above

27 f.) but as many subjects as he has, and may well be called the father of them all. Just as the pagans of old called such pious princes fathers and saviors.

(31) Now behold what a hospital such a prince can build, and may make neither stone nor wood, neither builders nor endowment nor pension for it! It is, of course, a deliciously good work for him to endow a hospital and help poor people; but when it becomes so large that the whole country, and especially the right poor, enjoy it, then it is a mean, quite princely, yes, a heavenly and divine hospital. For few people enjoy that hospital, and sometimes false, bad boys under beggar's name; but this hospital receives 1) only the right poor, as widows, orphans, guests, and other abandoned people. In addition receives

1) get - to come.

Let every man, whether he be rich or not rich, have his food and goods, that he become neither a beggar nor a poor man. For if the right were not preserved, no one could keep anything before the other, and all would become beggars, perish and perish. And as many as are not beggars or become beggars, so much does the overlord provide in this hospital. For it is the same work and virtue and alms, if one helps someone, that he does not have to become a beggar, as if one gives and helps the one who has become a beggar.

32 Behold, who is it that sees or respects such virtue in this state of the gods? What reason would seek it therein? It does not shine and glisten, therefore it is not valid. But if a prince or princess were once to go to a hospital and serve the poor there, and wish their feet 2c. (as one reads of St. Elisabeth, and as some great people still do in French-speaking countries), oh, that would be a splendid thing that glistens, and can open eyes and make one boast about all virtue. And it is true that one must and should praise it as a great, beautiful, but still as a human virtue; but what is it against this divine virtue, since a prince without ceasing does greater and more services to all who are poor, or otherwise should become poor? No one praises or extols this, for no one knows it or respects it.

For this reason the heathen also say that righteousness is such a beautiful virtue that neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the morning star can be so beautiful. And summa, according to the gospel or spiritual office, there is no better treasure on earth, no greater treasure, no rich alms, no beautiful endowment, no fine good than authority, which establishes and upholds justice; these are called gods. God has placed such great virtue, benefits, fruits and good works in this state, for he did not call them gods for nothing. Nor does he want it to be a lazy, idle, idle state in which only honor, violence, pleasure, or vain selfishness and willfulness are sought, but he wants them to be full of great, innumerable, unspeakable, good works, so that they may be partakers with him of divine majesty, and help him to do vain divine, superhuman works.

(34) The third virtue is that they may protect and guard against iniquity and violence, that is, make peace. Thus the emperors themselves have divided their office into these two parts, saying, An emperor or prince shall be armed with laws and weapons. That is why they paint on their letters that they have a book and a sword in their hands, to indicate that they should administer justice and peace. Justice is wisdom, which must be first among the two; for to rule by force without wisdom is not lasting. They also have crowns of gold on their heads, that they may know how they have been set up as gods by God, and not by themselves, that they should be his fellow servants.

35 But who can tell all about this third virtue, its benefits and piety? One would have to tell before what peace is good for and what harm unpeace does. But who on earth is so eloquent and so high-minded that he will refrain from telling both these things? For all that peace is good for, God creates for us through such gods, and all that peace can do harm, God prevents for us through such gods. Now we have from peace our body and life, wife and child, house and yard, yes, all limbs, hands, feet, eyes and all health and freedom, and sit securely in this wall of peace; it is probably half a kingdom of heaven where there is peace. Again, if you had the Turk's money and goods, and were sitting in strife, all your goods could not provide you with so much that you could have a happy bite, a quiet drink of water, but there is worry, fear, and danger everywhere, if things turn out well. If it gets worse, there is blood, fire, robbery and all kinds of misfortune, so that peace can be counted as half a hell, or the prelude to hell and its beginning.

(36) But peace can help you make a morsel of dry bread taste like sugar, and a drink of water like malt liquor. And what do I fool, that I should tell the profit of peace, and the harm of strife? So much more would I count the sand of the sea, or the leaves and grass of the forest. Christ himself Matth. 5, 9. compares peace to the kingdom of heaven, and says: "The seeds of peace

shall be called the children of God. But God's children do not belong in the world, just as peace does not belong in it.

37 Now behold, all such virtues also lie in heaps in this state; nor are they seen, for they also do not shine. They cannot shine with great goodness and abundance. But the empty, loose, and vain works that shine, they have the appearance.

38 For I must remember here my monks and priests, who have the fame and name that they carry heaven with their divine service, and are of course the great whale, Kunz Hildebrand, who carries the world on his tail, as the peasants say. But what are they all compared to a man who lives in such divine office? They are the Bracken, 1) who lie on the cushions and whistle with their butts. Or, lest I speak too near to their honor, I consider that they are as useful in the world as the rust on the iron. For what the rust does for a carpenter's tool, they also do in the world, or in this divine state. Yes, I will take the very best among them, as the hermits have been, St. Hilarion, Jerome, and whoever else they are, who have great names from their holy hermit life. If it should apply to change and desire, then I would rather be a pious scribe or faithful shoemaker here, with these gods, than be a two-faced Hilarion there, or Jerome among the angels; whether my little pen or penny would not shine so excellently before the world, as that gray beard and wrinkled skin, I did not ask much, if I would only be found to be a member of all these divine three virtues of authority, of which we have now said.

39 See now what an imperial, even a heavenly castle such a prince can build to protect his subjects. It is indeed good and necessary to have strong cities and castles, good armor and weapons against the enemy, but it is nothing to be counted among them if a prince builds a castle of peace, that is, if he has a desire for peace and keeps peace with his subjects. For this they say

The Romans themselves, the greatest warriors on earth, said that to wage war is to fish with a golden rod; if it were lost, the fishery could not pay for it, but if it were caught, the cost would far exceed the gain. One must not start a war or struggle for it; it will probably come all too soon, uninvited. Keep peace as long as you can, but it should not remain, even if you buy it for all the money that would go to war and be won through war; victory never repays what is lost through war.

(40) Behold, these are the three chief virtues of the gods touched upon in these three verses, any one of which in particular can make the whole world full of good and salvation. The first verse demands the first virtue, that the gods or rulers and lords should honor God's word above all things and promote teaching the same, saying, "How long will you judge unjustly, and prefer the ungodly person?" The ungodly and false teachers always have a great appearance and prestige before reason and the world, and also know how to present themselves well, both to lords and to the populace, so that they strengthen and spread their poison and error. For, as St. Paul says in the sixth Galatians, v. 12, 13, their comfort and defiance is not in God, therefore they must seek human comfort and defiance. This is the meaning of the verse "preferring a person", or looking at a person, where one chooses doctrine not out of love for the truth, but out of lust for the person against the other, which vice St. Jude also rebukes the ungodly in his epistle, v. 16.

The other verse teaches the other virtue, that they should establish and administer justice, so that the poor, the miserable, the widows, the orphans, may not be oppressed, but may come to their rights and remain in their rights, saying:

V. 3. Judge the poor and the fatherless, and help the wretched and the needy to justice.

42. for [by] thus actually saying, to justice they shall help, he intimates that judges and courts are indeed there; but it is according to favor or friendship, out of envy.

1) Bracke - dog.

or revenge, so that he who is vainly wrong must often be right.

43] The third verse teaches the third virtue, that they should guard against violence and harm, and resist iniquity, punish the wicked, and let the sword pass over the wicked, that peace may be kept in the land, saying:

V. 4: Save the poor and lowly, deliver him from the hand of the wicked.

44 In the previous verse he calls it right, in this one the hand, indicating that there he is speaking of wrong, and here of wrongdoing. For the two also go together in the world, namely injustice and violence, as one says: He does me violence and injustice. Injustice is done by judgment or with the mouth; violence is done with the fist and with iniquity; a ruler and lord shall control both.

45 These are now these three verses, which comprehend all the princely virtues, which may well be called virtutes heroicas, chivalrous virtues, which are thus called and praised in Hercule, Hector, Achille, and in other great sirs and lords, because they have fought great battles, murdered much, and have honestly proved their manliness and joyfulness by fighting. We let that happen. But here open your eyes to me, and behold the man who is one of these gods, and may control injustice and sacrilege (I will be silent about the first virtue, to promote God's word), stand against knaves and husks, protect and save the pious and the poor, administer discipline and peace in the land. This man does not beat Hector, or Achille, or other great giants, but he beats even greater, monstrous giants, namely all the devils with all their evil. Dear, there must be a heart worthy of nine hearts; there must also be loyalty that surpasses all loyalty.

46 And that we conclude these three verses. Such a man should have the three divine offices and names with honor, that he should help, nourish, save, and therefore be called a savior, father, and kind one. For by the first virtue, if he promotes the word of God, he helps many to blessedness, so that they, delivered from sins and death, attain salvation. By the other virtue, when he administers justice, he feeds all his subjects like a father.

his children. For, as it is said (§ 31), if justice did not stand, no one would keep anything from the other. By the third virtue, when he controls iniquity and punishes the wicked, he protects the poor and keeps the peace, so that he is a right honest man or knight, and leads yellow spurs cheaply. For I respect that knight comes from save, and from your word save afterwards became knight; a right, fine name for princes and lords.

47 For we find how our ancient Germans gave fine names to princes and lords, as in the Saxon language "Ludewig," praesidium, arx populi, but Wig means a castle, or fortress, where one has refuge, and where [one] can go in time of need. Thus a prince should be a "Ludewig", that is, the comfort and refuge of the people. Item, "Heger", 1) therefore, that he should guard, satisfy, protect and protect his land and people. Hermann", whom the Latini misuse and call Arminium, is called a "Heermann", dux belli, who is capable of army and battle, to save his own, and to go in front, to risk his life and limb over it. So also from saving they have called their overlords saviors or knights, that they have saved their lentlein from adversity. And so they are admonished by the name of their office, rank and virtue. Such and such names they have undoubtedly been moved to give by the work and virtue they have seen and experienced in the princes.

(48) Such virtues shall they have and practice, saith he; but how is it? There is a contradiction, and three devilish vices go on among the gods, against these divine virtues; for the world is perverse, and perverts all God's gifts and goods. It does the same with these divine offices. For the very princes and rulers who should promote the word of God, most of all reject, forbid and persecute it, but instead promote the false, harmful teachers, as we read that the kings of Israel and Judah did. King Ahab 2) and

1) "Vod" from "voden", which is, to cherish, nourish, rear. Vod ("Bodo") is a nourisher, herdsman, shepherd. Walch, old edition, vol. XIV, 1306.

2) Erlanger: "Ahaz." There, Walch's correct reading "Ahab" is noted as a variant, and yet the wrong reading is retained.

his queen Jezabel fed at eight hundred prophets of Baal and drove out all the prophets of God for it, so that even the one Elijah could not stay in the land. So [has] also happened until now, and still happens now. The world full of monks and priests could be supported, also the princes and lords could be lifted up; but a Johannem Hus or Leonhard Kaisers cannot be tolerated. And this verse goes by force, that they judge unjustly, that is, they abuse and pervert their office, and prefer the wicked person, that is, they promote the wicked, and hinder the godly.

Who can tell what abominable evil and harm such a prince or lord does? who thereby drives so many souls into hell and deprives them of eternal bliss that he might well be called not God but the devil, who helps God build and fill not a heaven or paradise, but hell for Beelzebub. How small are the sins of a common man or woman against the sins of the Lord. For what evil can a thief, a murderer, an adulterer do against that which such a prince does? Here it is said, truly, that great thieves cause petty thieves to be executed, and great murderers cause petty murderers to be killed. For as it is said, "A wise man does no small foolishness," so also a great man can do no small evil; just as again, they can do no small wisdom and virtue, because they are put in the position where they must do great things, whether good or evil. Just as there is no greater, nobler treasure on earth than a godly overlord, so there is no more shameful plague on earth than a godless overlord.

(50) So it is also with the other virtue, to administer justice, to help the poor and the fatherless; as daily experience and common complaints well testify. And in Germany, in particular, it happens that one prince hinders another, one nobleman another, one city another, and all together one hinders the other, so that even if one part would like to be righteous, it cannot come to that before the other, and must leave injustice to the other.

1) Luther writes this name soon Keyser, soon Keiser, soon Kaiser. In this place the first edition has: Keser, likewise the Wittenberg and Jonas.

It is as if Germany were *populus sine lege*, a people without laws, and there is almost no distinction between the estates and offices. A prince is emperor, he is also a merchant and trader. Likewise, a count is a prince, a nobleman is a grass, a burgher is a nobleman, a peasant is a burgher, a servant is a master, a maid is a wife, a disciple is a master; everyone is what he wants, and does what he desires, holds himself as he pleases. What good and right comes out of this for the poor bunch, that can well be found. And who can tell all such virtues or describe them sufficiently?

(51) It is the same with the third virtue, to save the poor. There is no punishment nor discipline, no fear nor timidity; all kinds of courage, both among peasants and nobles, have come to the highest, so that wherever one speaks against it, they only become the angrier, and do the more to spite and annoyance; for they see and know that [it] goes to them in this way and remains unpunished. And almost now is the time when the prophet Amos [Cap. 5, 13.] says of them, "It is a time that even a wise man must be silent." For if one wants to speak against it, then they do not act differently, as if it were indicated to them how they may make it worse. How could it become worse, if neither silence nor speech helps? If one is silent, they get worse from day to day; if one speaks against it, they get worse still; so the poor and miserable must suffer and remain unsaved. This is all the fault of the princes and overlords, who have allowed these things to fall to such an extent that they are now unable to defend themselves, even though they would like to. But one will come, who will drive away such wanton tickling, and who will break the dear juggernaut, honestly. For it has come too high; we make it too much, that the sack must tear, and the rope break. God help his own, amen.

The question here is: Because the gods or authorities, in addition to the other virtues, should promote the Word of God and the preachers, whether they should also prevent and punish the repugnant teachings or heresies, because no one should nor can be forced to believe? Here the answer is: First

There are also some heretics who are rebellious, who publicly teach that one should not suffer authority. Item, that no Christian may sit in a position of authority. Item, that one should not have anything of one's own, but run away from wife and child, leave house and yard, or keep and have all things in common. These are to be punished by the authorities, without a doubt, as those who publicly strive against worldly rights and authorities, Romans 13:2. For they are not only heretics, but as rebels they attack the authorities and their rule and order, just as a thief attacks other people's property, a murderer other people's bodies, and an adulterer other people's spouses, all of which is not to be suffered.

(53) Secondly: Where some would teach against a public article of faith, which is clearly founded in Scripture, and is believed in all the world by all Christendom, as those who teach the children in the Creed: as, if any would teach that Christ is not God, but an evil man, and hold like another prophet, as the Turks and the Anabaptists do, they shall not suffer either, but shall be punished as public blasphemers; for they are not evil only heretics, but public blasphemers. Now it is the duty of the authorities to punish the public blasphemers, as one punishes those who otherwise curse, swear, revile, blaspheme, reproach, defame, slander 2c. For such teachers, with their blasphemy, defile God's name and take away the neighbor's honor before the world. In the same way, the authorities should punish, or not punish, those who teach that Christ did not die for our sins, but that each one should be enough for himself. For this is also a public blasphemy against the gospel and against the common article, when we pray in faith thus, "I believe the forgiveness of sins"; and "in Jesus Christ, dead, risen" 2c. Item, whoever teaches that the resurrection of the dead, and eternal life or hell is nothing, and the like; as the Sadducees and Epicureans, who are also now becoming many among the great wise men. For by this no one is urged to believe, for he may well believe what he will. Only the teaching and blasphemy is forbidden to him, so that he wants God.

and deprive the Christians of their doctrine and word, and yet will do so to their detriment under their own protection and together with all worldly use. He will go where there are no Christians and do it there. For, as I have said, he who wants to live among the citizens must keep the city law, and not desecrate and defile it, or be insolent. Thus we read that the holy fathers in the Concilio Niceno did: as soon as they heard the Arian doctrine read, they all hissed in unison, and would not hear it nor let it come to proof or responsibility, but condemned it immediately without all dispute as the public blasphemers. Moses in his law also commanded to stone such blasphemers, yes, all false teachers [Deut. 13, 1. ff]. So also here one should not do much disputing, but also condemn such public blasphemy unheard and unanswered; as also Paul gives Titus the third, v. 10, that one should avoid a heretic and let him go, if he is admonished once or twice; and Timothy he reproves the quarreling about words and disputing, which does nothing but turn the listeners wrong [1 Tim. 6, 20]. For such common articles of all Christendom have already been sufficiently heard, proved, and decided by the Scriptures and confessions of all common Christendom, confirmed with many miraculous signs, sealed with much blood of the holy martyrs, attested and defended with all teachers' books, and no longer need mastering or beating.

54 Thirdly: If it happens that in a parish, city or dominion the papists and Lutherans (as they are called) shout against each other and preach against each other about some articles, since both want to have the Scriptures for themselves, I would not like to suffer such discord, and my Lutherans should also gladly resign and remain silent where they notice that they are not gladly heard; as Christ teaches Matth. 10, 14, and let themselves be forced to preach; as I do. For I easily desist where they will not hear me, and all my preaching and writing I have been forced and compelled to do. But if no one here wants to, or perhaps, for the sake of office, cannot give way or remain silent, then let the authorities do so and interrogate the matter,

and whichever part does not agree with the Scriptures, it is commanded to be silent; as the great emperor Constantine did, and had his governor Probum interrogate Athanasium and Arium against each other and recognize the matter. For it is not good to let repugnant preaching go out to the people in a parish or parish; for from it arise mobs, discord, hatred and envy, even in other secular matters.

55 Fourthly: Where, however, some cry out against each other over such articles, since both parts confess that [it] is not Scripture, but old custom or man's law, arising besides and apart from Scripture, as plates, holy water, seasoning, and such unnecessary things more, which are confirmed neither with miraculous signs nor martyr's blood, then one should by no means suffer such bickering in the pulpit, but command both parts that they have peace. For what the Scripture does not have, preachers should not quarrel about before the people, but should always drive the Scripture. For love and peace go far beyond all ceremonies, as St. Paul also says that peace should have precedence over everything, and it is unchristian that peace and unity should give way to ceremonies. If this does not help, then one is commanded to be silent who, without Scripture, insists on the ceremonies as necessary for salvation and wants to entangle the consciences.

(56) What I say of public sermons, I say much more of sermons in corners and secret ceremonies, for these are not to be suffered in all things; otherwise a man may read and believe what he will in himself. If he does not want to hear God, let him hear the devil. But as for certain articles of Scripture, they are both to be preached publicly and also to be read and taught in houses to the servants. With all this, no one is forced to believe, but peace is made for the congregation from troublesome minds, and the preachers are controlled from their evil deeds, who sneak into the houses without being called and sent, and let out their poison before the priest or the authorities find out. These are the thieves and murderers, as Christ tells us in John 10:8, who fall into strange churches and take hold of a strange office that is not commanded but forbidden to them.

57 A citizen is obligated, if such a sneak comes to him, before he hears the same or has him taught, to report it to his authority and also to the parish priest, whose parishioner he is. If he does not do this, he should know that he, as a disobedient man to his authorities, is doing against his oath, and as a despiser of his parish priest (to whom he owes honor) is acting against God; he himself is guilty of this and also becomes a thief and a prankster with the sneak, as the 50th Psalm says. Psalm, v. 16-20, says of such teachers of the angles: "God said to the wicked, 'Why do you proclaim My judgments and take My covenant into your mouth, when you hate punishment and throw My words behind you? When you see a thief (that is, a thief of souls, Joh. 10, 8.), you run with him and have a part with the adulterers (that is, with the superstitious and heretics). You let your mouth speak evil and your tongue speak falsehood. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, and slanderest thy mother's son."

58 If Muenzer, Carlstadt and their companions had not been allowed to creep and crawl into strange houses and churches, where no one had sent them, nor had they been ordered to do so, all the great misfortune would have remained. But that the apostles also first went into strange houses and preached, they had orders, and were appointed and sent to preach in all places, as Christ said [Marc. 16, 15.]: "Go into all the world, and preach to all creatures." But after that, no one has such a common apostolic command anymore, but every bishop or pastor has his certain church district or parish, which St. Peter 1 Petr. 5, 3. also calls clerics for this reason, that is, parts, that every one is commanded his part of the people; as St. Paul Tito also writes. Paul Tito also writes that no one else or stranger, without his knowledge and will, shall be subject to teach his parishioners, neither secretly nor publicly; and no one shall listen to him in body and soul, but shall announce and report to his pastor or authority.

59 And this is to be held firmly, that no preacher, no matter how pious or righteous he may be, should preach among the people of a papist or heretic priest, nor should he preach in secret.

The priest is not commanded to teach without the knowledge and will of the priest. For he is not commanded. But what is not commanded is to be left undone. We have enough to do if we want to do what is commanded. Nor does it help them to pretend that all Christians are priests. It is true that all Christians are priests, but not all priests. For beyond being a Christian and a priest, he must also have an office and a commanded church. The bernf and command makes parish priests and preachers. Just as a citizen or layman may be learned, but is not therefore a doctor, that he may read publicly in the schools, or submit to such an office, unless he is called to it.

(60) This is what I have had to say about the sneak preachers and assassins, of whom there are now so many, to warn all pastors and authorities to watch diligently, to admonish and command their people to beware of such runners and boys, and to avoid them as certain messengers of the devil, unless they bring good news and testimony of their calling and command from God, for such work, in such churches. Otherwise, they should not be allowed or heard, even if they wanted to teach the pure gospel, or even if they were angels and a veritable Gabriel from heaven. For God does not want anything done by their own choice or devotion, but everything by command and calling, especially the ministry of preaching; as St. Peter says, 2 Petr. 1, 21: "This you should know for the first, no prophecy has ever been produced by human will, but the holy men of God have spoken, driven by the Holy Spirit."

For this reason Christ did not want to let the devils speak, since they proclaimed him the Son of God and spoke the truth [Lnc. 4, 34. 35. Marc. 1, 24. 25.], because he did not want to allow such examples to preach without a profession. Let every man therefore remember: If he will preach or teach, let him prove the calling and command which impels and compels him, or else keep silence. If he does not want to, then the authorities should order such a boy to the right master, who is called Master Hans; this is then his right, as he certainly has a riot, or even more trouble in mind, to cause among the people.

62 Here you might say to me: Why do you teach with your books all over the world, since you are a preacher in Wittenberg alone? Answer: I have never liked to do it, nor do I like to do it yet; but I was forced and driven into such an office in the first place, since I had to become a doctor of the Holy Scriptures, without my thanks. I began as a doctor, then by papal and imperial command, in a common, free high school, as befits such a doctor according to his sworn office, to interpret the Scriptures before all the world and to teach everyone; thus, after I came into such an office, I had to remain in it; I cannot yet go back or leave with a good conscience, even though the pope and emperor banished me from it. For what I have begun as a doctor, made and appointed by their command, I must truly confess to the end of my life, and now I cannot remain silent nor stop, as I would like to do, and am so tired and unhappy about the great unpleasant ingratitude of the people.

63 Even though I am not such a doctor, I am nevertheless an appointed preacher, and may well have taught my own with writings. Whether or not others have desired my writings and asked me for them, I am obliged to do so, for I have nowhere penetrated myself with them, nor have I been desired or asked by anyone to read them; Just as other more pious pastors and preachers write books, and neither prevent nor force anyone to read them, and also teach and run with them in all the world, and yet do not, like these loose, unappointed boys, sneak into foreign offices without the knowledge and will of the pastors, but have a certain office and command that drives and forces them.

(64) But would anyone persuade me further that such blasphemers should not be punished, nor should they be resisted; for we suffer and tolerate the Jews, who blaspheme our Lord Christ and his mother, together with all the saints and Christians, both with doctrines and speeches? Answer: They also have their punishment, that they remain outside of Christendom, and do not have to come under any worldly rule. Neither do they suffer it from them, where they publicly

They are much less likely to blaspheme among Christians in public preaching or by preaching from the corner, as these poisonous lurkers do, who do not want to blaspheme anywhere except among those who have been baptized and are called Christians; they do not want to be unworthy of this in the eyes of the world, as the Jews are, but to be praised and honored as the most infamous. But if they went, or remained, where there are no Christians, and no one heard them, as the Jews, they should be blasphemed among the stones and trees, in a forest, or in the depths of the sea, or in a fiery oven.

(65) Further, perhaps some will sly against me and pretend that with such teaching I am confidently strengthening the tyrants who persecute the gospel, opening windows and doors. For since they consider our gospel to be heresy and blasphemy, they will now first of all adorn themselves and pretend that their conscience and office compel them to punish us as blasphemers 2c. Answer: What do I ask about this? If we were to leave out necessary teaching for the sake of the tyrants, we would have had to leave out the whole gospel long ago. If they do the right thing, they will find it, and I will let them take care of it. They knowingly use their power in worldly matters as well to harm and hinder others in the most courageous way; what wonder is it that they do us wrong? Since they, like the blind, cannot see our teachings, and, like the senseless, cannot hear them. Thus the kings of Israel slew the true prophets; yet the commandment was not to abolish or to hide from stoning the false prophets. But pious authorities will punish none, for they see, hear, know, and know that blasphemers are. That's enough of that, let's go back to the Psalms.

V. 5 But they do not perceive it and do not respect it, but walk in darkness. All the foundations of the land will fall.

This verse laments and says that, unfortunately, the gods leave their office and virtue, and do the antagonism of vice [as said above 48 ff]. But they shall not have done it in vain. He wants to overthrow them, that

They are sure that they will fall, but they do not believe it until they hear about it. Yes, they probably have their mockery when one says of them this piece: "The foundations will fall down." For they feel that they are firmly seated and have power; and as the text itself says, they are called "the foundations of the land," that is, rocks and stones, on which the land and dominion stand and rest. For as Christ in his kingdom is the cornerstone, rock, or foundation upon which the church is built and stands, so every ruler or lord of his country or people is a cornerstone, rock, and foundation; as such a manner of speaking is almost common in Scripture, that kings and princes are called rocks or corners; as when Isaiah calls the king of Egypt a rock of the people, and the like.

67 So he meets their defiance with this, and speaks with great dread: Even though you sit firm, and are all rocks and foundations in the land, I will overthrow you and push you over, and you will fall down and perish. And if you look at the histories next to this, you will find heaps of how God overthrows, throws, hurls, exterminates and savagely deals with the tyrants and godless kings and lords, so that he may make this verse come true, which they do not want to believe. Read in the books of the kings, and see how he cut off Jeroboam, Ahab, Joram, Ochosias, 1) kings. Likewise also among the Gentiles, the emperors Julius, Nero, Domitianus 2c. Our times should also give enough examples, if one wanted to consider it or look at it; but one forgets it all and does not respect it, and this verse must be their liar forever, until they learn how certainly true it is.

(68) They deserve such downfall, because they do not accept it, do not respect anything, and "walk in darkness. These are the three above-mentioned vices. The first one, that they do not accept God's word to promote anything. If only they had what they want; where God and His word remain, they do not inquire so much. If he wants to be a god and promote his word, he may do so himself; they have much to ask.

1) Ochosias (in the Vulgate), which is Ahaziah, 2 Kings. 1, 2. 17.

They have nothing else to do than to exercise their virtue and office. For this purpose they do not accept it at all, so much that they do not like to hear it and learn it, so that they may know what it is. And, what is even worse, they persecute it, condemn it outrageously, and deal so carelessly with such destruction of souls and with the killing and murder of right preachers, as if it were a game or a joke to deprive people so miserably of body and soul, and then want to have done God a service.

(69) The other vice is that they do not respect even the secular government to provide justice and protection for the poor and miserable. Not only are they careless and negligent in this, but they also plague their subjects themselves with violence and injustice, or see through their fingers that it is done by others; and yet no one should and must say that it is unjust, so that they may soon become ripe for punishment, and complete their wickedness and close the register.

The third, that they walk in darkness, and live in such a godly state and office for themselves alone, just as if they had received the authority that they should seek and do their benefit and honor, their lust and will, their pride and splendor, and not owe anyone to serve or help with it. This then is a purely worldly, dark life, since they do not know what they should do or what 1) they should do; but go about like the blind, who govern themselves only by feeling and groping. So these also do what they feel and what they desire; they also see no further than what their office demands. Therefore they must fall and perish as they deserve.

Now, a human heart should be greatly shocked when it hears what kind of judgments and speeches are made in heaven about such tyrants. For this verse shows clearly enough that they have the honor before God and all the angels that they are considered despisers and persecutors of God's word, frevele.

and incompetent rulers, and those who are blind and walk in darkness, and shall be overthrown in a short time. The whole heaven is full of such words, and the earth also is full of them through this verse. But they have armed themselves against this with a strong, thick unbelief, which creates a stony heart and an iron head in them, so that they do not pay attention to such words and wait for their judgment with defiance and pride. Let them go to the devil, because they do not want anything else.

V. 6. I have said that you are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High.

Seventy-two: There it is written that they are gods and are called gods; that they confidently exalt themselves, defy and insist on such their power. He confesses that they are gods and have power. And this is also true. But this is shameful, that they do not recognize from whom they have it, but proceed with it as if they had it from themselves, and want to do with it as they wish, neither serving God nor men with it, but wanting to be free gods, without all God and above all God.

(73) Here he is to speak into such iniquity, saying, Ye know very well that ye are gods, and that ye have power: how soon have ye learned and grasped it! But when will you also learn from whom you have it? Where am I? Where are my commandments, which I commanded you? You have not commanded it, but I, I, I have said it, that you are gods; my command and my word makes and orders you gods, and keeps you in it, not your word, wisdom or power. You are made gods by my word, like all creatures, and not gods yourselves, or born gods, like me. If I had not named and commanded, your none would not be God. Mine is all such power, authority, property, honor, land and people, and everything that belongs to it; I have given it to you, you have neither acquired nor won it yourselves. But how finely you thank me for it, that you reject me together with my words, and think badly of no God.

74. How, they say, shall we not know that we have it from thee, and take thee for our God? Let that be far from us. You know

1) All German editions have converted this "Was" of the original into "nicht". Jonas, however, has recorded the original reading: Ignorant, ndi sint, ^niit rant, ant <gnüt ipsi Avrenctnri et taewuckulir e-x Dki inunüto.

otherwise, see our title, in which we publicly boast and confess this: We N., by the Grace of God King of N. We N., by the Grace of God, Duke of N. We N., by the Grace of God, Prince of N., and the like. So you hear that we confess to have received our authority by the grace of God; what more do you want? It is true, the words are right and good, and princes should write so. But do you know me a people, of whom the prophet says Isa. 29, 13: "This people honors me with their mouth, but their heart is far from me"? And Christ Matth. 7, 21: "They shall not all enter into the kingdom of heaven that say unto me, Lord, Lord; but he that doeth the will of my Father" 2c. And Paul 1 Cor. 4, 20: "The kingdom of God is not in words, but in deeds."

(75) What good is it, then, that you speak highly of yourself and profess that you are a lord of God's grace, when your heart and your whole life are no different than if you had no God and were a free lord of yourself, who had all power to do against God's commandment, according to all your will? For he who does not respect or keep God's word does not respect or keep God Himself. For whoever honors or has God must have Him in and through His word; otherwise it is impossible to attain, have or know God. Since the gods do not respect or have God's word and command, they do not have God. If they have no God, they must have become gods of themselves, and this verse must be a lie and false: "I have said that you are gods." See now how many princes and lords there are who use such a title: "We, by the grace of God," 2c. with a right heart and a truthful mouth. The several parts bear witness to their own necks, that they falsely and shamefully lie to God, blaspheme and desecrate His holy name with it, as they use it as a sound cover for their tyranny and wickedness; of which there would be much to speak.

(76) One might wonder why he calls such wicked people, whom he scolds so harshly, children of God or of the Most High, since God's children are called holy believers in the Scriptures? Answer: It is a great wonder that he calls such wicked people children of God or of the Most High.

It is more that he calls them gods than that he calls them children of God. But it is all in the word, "I have said." For we have often said that God's word sanctifies and gilds all things to which it is put. Therefore, such states, which are established with God's word, are all called holy divine states, although the persons are not holy. As, father, mother, son, daughter, master, wife, servant, maid, preacher, pastor 2c. are all holy divine positions, and yet within them the persons might well be boys and husks. Thus, because God establishes and grasps the authority here with his word, they are called gods and God's children for the sake of the divine state and God's word, and yet they are bad boys, as he complains and scolds here.

V. 7. Therefore you will die like men and fall like one among princes.

Because they do not want to honor God with their deity, as he commands, but act as if they have nothing from God and everything from themselves, he threatens them here that he will punish them and punish them so that they will lose their deity. He wants to depose them and strip them of their deity, so that they die and perish, not as gods or as children of God, but as men, so that they both, in life and death, are like men who are without God's word and will be lost. For the Word of God makes a hasty distinction among Adam's children. Those who have God's word are called and are not bad people, but holy people, God's children, Christians 2c., but those who are without God's word are bad people, that is, in sins, in death, trapped under the devil forever, and are without God at all. Therefore it is a bad fame in the Scriptures who is called "man" or "man's child", and is a terrible, horrible dread that the evil gods should die and perish like men, that is, be eternally lost.

(78) So this piece also: "And shall fall 1) as one of the princes. Here he does not call them children of God or gods, but changes the name, and calls them badly merely

"Princes." As if he should say: A prince who is without God and without His word is certainly lost, and when he falls and perishes, he loses the divinity, that is, God's command, and perishes, as tyrants are wont to perish. But they do not believe this terrible doom and judgment either, but they want it and have to experience it. All histories are full of examples.

V. 8. God, arise and judge the earth, for you inherit among all the nations.

The people are too wicked, and the lords always disgrace God's name and word, because they abuse their divinity so shamefully. Therefore, he asks for a different regime and kingdom, where things are better inside, where people honor God's name, keep His word and serve Him. This is Christ's kingdom. Therefore he says: Oh God, come yourself and be judge on earth, be yourself king and Lord, because it is lost with the gods. For to you also belongs the kingdom among all the nations, in the whole world, as it is promised in the Scriptures.

This is the kingdom of Jesus Christ; this is the true God, who came and judges Himself; that is, He is the ruler of all the earth [Ps. 8:7]. For no empire is so far

gone among all Gentiles, as Christ's, and may be understood by none other than Christ Himself, this verse. This same God is a natural God, to whom it is not said: I have said that you are God, but freely thus: "God, arise and judge the earth" 2c. For Christ rightly implements the three divine virtues mentioned above: He promotes GOD's word and preachers; He establishes and upholds justice for the poor; He protects and saves the wretched; He punishes the ungodly and tyrants. For in Christianity there is worship, justice, peace, righteousness, life and blessedness 2c. Of which kingdom of Christ the gospels and epistles of the apostles preach and testify abundantly, therefore it is not necessary to speak of it here any longer.

81 Thus we see that above worldly righteousness, wisdom and authority, even if they are divine works, there is still another kingdom necessary, in which another righteousness, wisdom and authority can be found. For worldly righteousness has an end with this life, but the righteousness of Christ and his own in his kingdom remains forever. To this end, may the same King, our dear Lord and God, Jesus Christ, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, help us and keep us in the one, natural, eternal Godhead, praised and blessed forever. Amen.

22. interpretation of the 90th Psalm. *)

Explained in lectures in 1533 and 1534; printed in 1541.

Newly translated from the Latin.

Interpretation of the 90th Psalm,

by Doctor Martin Luther at the school in Wittenberg in 1534 in a public lecture.

Short preface [Luther's].

Since God has called us to be teachers of the churches, I have often said this about our ministry: Since there will be many after our death, and indeed there are already many today who despise theology and all studies, it is necessary that there be some who praise God and strive to propagate His word far and wide. Since we must persevere on this path until we complete our course and reach the goal of salvation set before us, I have decided, after having interpreted many Psalms, on well-considered advice, to explain this Psalm of Moses now, and then to spend the rest of my life, which the Lord will give me, on the interpretation of Moses.

turn. Because Moses is the source from which the holy prophets and also the apostles have drawn divine wisdom by inspiration (*beneficio*) of the Holy Spirit, we cannot do our work better or more correctly than if we also lead our disciples to this source and, according to our ability and the measure of our gift, indicate the seeds of divine wisdom which the Holy Spirit has scattered through Moses in such a way that no reason, no power of human insight (if it lacks the Holy Spirit) can see or understand them. But before we go to the title or to the Psalm itself, we must first talk a little more in detail about what this Psalm is about.

*The interpretation of this Psalm was begun in public lectures in 1533 (Köstlin, Martin Luther, Vol. II [3rd ed.], p. 307 f.), finished in 1534. In 1541 Veit Dietrich published it with a letter to D. Johann Heß, preacher in Breslau, in which he mentions that Luther had explained this Psalm, the prayer of Moses, before he went to the interpretation of Genesis. Therefore, he also wanted to begin with this Psalm before he started to work on the Genesis (which he himself had not heard from Luther's mouth). The title is: *Enarratio Psalmi XC per Doctorem Martinum Lutherani in Schola Vitebergensi, Anno 1534. publice absoluta. Vitebergae M.D.XLL.* Dietrich's letter is dated: *Datae Noribergae ex parochia Seballdiana, idibus Junii. 1541.* Two different German translations of this writing are available. One, which is literal, but often ponderous in expression, was published at Nuremberg without indication of the year and the translator under the title: "Der Neüntzigst Psalm. Ein Gepet Mosi was sterben sey, vnd wie man dem todt entpflehe, ausgelegt durch D. Mart. Luther. Printed at Nuremberg by Christoff Gutknecht." The other translation (more correctly: free adaptation) is exceedingly verbose and completely arbitrary. The first sentence of Luther's preface is spun out to half a folio page. Between this preface and the description of the contents of the psalm, there is a section that takes up more than a whole folio page, in which the thoughts that Dietrich expressed in his letter to Hess, and the like, are discussed. The title is: "The Prayer of Moses, the Man of God. The XO Psalm By D. Mart Luther, jnn. Latin language interpreted, vnd jtzit verdeutscht, Durch, /ⁿ. Johann Spangenberg, the imperial staff Northausen preacher." At the end: "Printed at Wittemberg, by Georgen Rhaw. N.D. in XDVI jar." The Latin is found in the Wittenberg Latin edition (1549), tom. III, col. 550b; in the Jena (1570), tom. IV, col. 512b (without Dietrich's attribution); in the Erlanger, opp., tow. XVIII, p. 260. Spangenberg's translation is found in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. III, p. 419; in the Altenburg, vol. VIII, p. 164 and in the Leipzig, vol. VI, p. 313. The Nuremberg translation is found in the Leidiger, vol. VI, p. 286 and in Walch, vol. V, 1074. Dietrich's attribution is missing in all German editions; we also omit it. We have translated anew from the Latin according to the Erlangen edition, which contains an imprint of the first edition, but we have compared the Wittenberg and Jena editions.

What this psalm is about.

The whole human race is so deeply fallen and blinded by original sin that man does not only not know himself and God, but also not even his misfortune, which he feels and suffers; he does not recognize this, nor where it comes from, nor does he see what it leads to. So great is the misery that our first parents contracted through sin, and which they passed on to their descendants. For behold, how foolishly the wisest of men have spoken of the most grievous and dreadful punishment, namely, death, which, like a flood, has brought such great calamity upon the whole human race: some counsel that it should be despised, as he said: You must neither fear nor wish for your last day; others, however, who think that this is all too difficult, try to persuade people that, in order to alleviate this evil, they should let their lusts run free in the present, as is said in a well-known but corrupt little verse taken from the epitaph of Sardanapalns: Ede, bibe, lude, post mortem nulla voluptas [Eat, drink and play; after death there is no pleasure]. Thus the wise of the world only entangle themselves in all the greater sins by wanting to remedy the punishment of sin. For death is not overcome by despising it, as highwaymen and soldiers think that they give proof of their bravery, even if they jokingly wish upon others the pestilence, the French (pustulas gallicas), and such like misfortunes. Another art, another medicine is needed.

The newer theologians do almost the same thing when, following the example of the pagans, they say in their funeral sermons: one should not grieve over it as if it were an evil; death is a kind of harbor in which we are safe and secure from all suffering and misfortune to which the life of all people is generally subject. This is only the utmost blindness, and another misery, which is still heaped upon original sin, that we so conflate sin and death itself with all the other misfortunes of the human race.

and argue against common sense, against experience itself, and flatter ourselves with quite frivolous and null thoughts. For this is not the way to speak of death, but it is, that I say so, pagan blindness and a fruit of original sin, that someone claims of his evil that it is no evil, while he feels and experiences the opposite.

But our Moses speaks far differently about death in this psalm. Because he has to deal with it first, that he makes the death and all other misfortune in this life as big as possible. In this he is, as his legal office requires, an exceedingly strict (*Mosissimus*) Moses, that is, a strict servant of death, of the wrath of God and of sin. Therefore he administers the office of the law in an excellent manner, and paints death with the most frightening colors, that it is the wrath of God by which we are killed, yes, he shows that we were already killed before and overwhelmed by tremendous misfortune, and here makes use of a new oratory (*rhethorica*) by calling death the wrath of God [v. 7.]. He adds from his art of conclusion (*dialectica*) the causative and the final cause of death and all misfortune in this life, he holds out to us that God is angry [v. 11]. Who, he says, would have believed that your wrath was so powerful? For that we die, it is through the unbearable wrath of God against sin. If you pay attention to the following words, you will easily recognize that he is not only talking about bodily death. For if that alone were to be expected, we would speak with the poet: You must neither fear nor wish for your last day. But we are under eternal death, since we are under the wrath of God, which we cannot overcome. In this way, Moses speaks of death as a lawgiver against the hardened and unintelligent sinners. But those who are frightened by the knowledge of their sins and of death, he teaches by his example to pray that God will make them see that the number of their days is small 2c.

In this psalm, therefore, Moses wants to frighten the stubborn and secure Epicureans who think that it is their task in this life to despise the wrath of God and death and to live like cattle that have nothing to hope for after this life. Moses shows them that death is an eternal tyrant, so that they, thus frightened, may learn to recognize their misfortune and may also be brought to the desire to be given the medicine that must be applied in this extreme emergency. Therefore, he first frightens, not that he wants to plunge into ruin or leave them in despair, but to indicate comfort to the frightened and to those who no longer walk in safety, and to give them the opportunity to be refreshed. Thus he combines the teaching of the Gospel with the law, although he presents the Gospel somewhat obscurely, for this sermon was intended to be a warning to our Lord Christ.

JEsu and the time of the new testament reserved, Moses however had to be Moses. Therefore, he touches the gospel only sparsely, so that this glory remains completely for the better Master, of whom the Father says [Matth. 17, 5]: "Him you shall hear."

These two pieces are to be noted in this psalm: first, that it magnifies the tyranny of death and the wrath of God, since it shows that human nature is subject to eternal death, namely, it scares the hard and unbelieving despisers of God; second, that it asks for a remedy against despair, so that people will not be left in despair. Therefore, it is an extremely useful psalm, in which we hear how Moses, in his actual ministry, terrifies sinners, and yet secretly (obscurely) indicates salvation, namely to humble the hopeful and comfort the humble.

From the title of the psalm.

Now the title is easy: "A Prayer of Moses." Jerome notes among other things in this Psalm that in the Psalms it is an established custom that always the ten following Psalms come from the author whose name is expressly set in the preceding Psalm. He may have said this according to the tradition of the rabbis. But it is not doubtful to me that only this one psalm is from Moses, and not the following ones, which have no title. For the Epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 4, 7] expressly says about the verse of the 95th Psalm [v. 7. f.]: "Today, when you hear his voice" 2c. that God spoke this through David. Therefore we want to believe that Jerome followed a fiction of the Jews. But that the present Psalm was written by Moses is proved not only by the title, but also by the way of expression, the things treated in it and its whole theology. Moses is called "a man of God" because he is especially sent by God to teach the law among the people. But as Moses is otherwise in teaching the law, so he is also here in praying. He is a servant of the

Death, sin and condemnation, so that he may frighten the hopeful and those who are secure in sins, and clearly show them their misery (sua mala), neither covering nor hiding anything, which he does in this prayer, as we will see. Paul also calls Timothy "a man of God" [1 Tim. 6, 11], but this designation has a somewhat different cause. For the word does not designate a man per se, but is often used for a person in authority who is publicly a man, who is in a public office, as it is said in the 2nd book of Kings [Cap. 4, 40.]: "O man of God, death in a pot!" that is, you who are publicly placed in the office which is of God, you who are an instrument of God, whose sayings and deeds are received as if they had been done by God Himself. In this way, you must understand the designation "man of God" here, that Moses had such an office, which was commanded to him by God, so that when he teaches, one does not attribute less faith to him than God himself.

Therefore, the title conceives these dyei things in itself: the person, the reputation (auctoritatem) and the work. The reputation is this: as, since

When Paul calls himself "a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1, 1.), this is not a hopefulness, but a necessary price of his word and office. Thus Moses does not call himself a man of God out of hopefulness, but because the office commanded to him by God requires that he be believed, no differently than if God himself preached. But, you will say, he has sinned at the water of the Hader [Deut. 20:10 ff], therefore it is not safe to believe him in all things. I answer: It is true that he sinned, but he was also punished by a special judgment of God, and at the same time it is indicated what is sin and what is not. In that he has been punished, God has forbidden to believe him. But in that he has not been punished, Moshe's mission and reputation remain, his profession remains whole, he remains God's instrument. Therefore, whoever despises him despises God. Thus David remained a man of God or a king regardless of his sin or fall, for even though he sinned, his profession remained unharmed. Thus we may fall daily, but nothing is broken off from the office or the word by our sin, although I do not know whether our profession can be compared with the profession of those people. Thus the deeds and sayings of this Moses are to be considered divine, and must be accepted as sayings of the Holy Spirit, who recognizes our misery better than we ourselves do. Since the Gentiles do not recognize the misery in which they live and die, which they experience and feel, how should they recognize what concerns God? Therefore, we should consider that this psalm was made and presented to us by the Holy Spirit Himself, in which He teaches us about our misery, which He does not call a weakness or a disease, as some useless babblers (*mataeologi*) do, nor does He speak of tinder, as the sophists do, but He teaches as a man of God, who must be believed as if God Himself were preaching.

But also the title of the psalm, that it bears the inscription "a prayer," reminds us of the rule which is necessary and very comforting in theology, namely, that wherever the commandments or works of the first tablet are dealt with, the resurrection of the dead is indicated covertly, as

Christ's exceedingly beautiful masterly saying testifies [Matth. 22, 32.]: "GOD is not a GOD of the dead, but of the living." Therefore, although Moses, by his ministry, kills by indicating sin and its punishments, nevertheless, because he calls this Psalm "a prayer," he also indicates covertly, yet in certain words, the remedy against death, and thus in two ways surpasses the writings of all the heathen. Aristotle holds, as do the monks, that contemplation (*meditatio*) of death is the remedy that makes death more bearable. But if we weigh the matter rightly, it is clearly better to be an epicure than to contemplate death when the second part is missing, namely, after anger, the hope of life and mercy. When this is gone, it is better to eat, drink and take care of oneself than to toil in vain with worries about the evil that one cannot avoid, especially since these thoughts, when they are without hope of help, provoke the heart to anger against God, to blasphemy and impatience. For it is true what Cato said: He who fears death also loses what he lives. Therefore, this wisdom is not suitable for the human race, especially since it brings so much misery with it. We must climb higher and turn our eyes to the divine wisdom that Moses teaches here, which makes death so great and so frightening, and yet also shows that there is still hope, so that those who are frightened and humiliated are not driven to despair.

In this way, the pagans cannot teach, but only the Holy Spirit, and this knowledge does not grow in our house, but must be received from the Man of God. Death has such great power that it devours us before we mean it. Therefore, we must go to another light; it must be revealed from heaven how hearts must be raised up in this danger. The pagans prove their oratory here, as Cicero does in his *Tusculanes*, but he cannot indicate a right and certain remedy. For even while he discusses this, it becomes apparent that he cannot persuade himself of what he tries to persuade other people of. That now

The title Moses gave to this psalm, "A Prayer," at the same time indicates by this name that there is hope of life. For what does prayer mean? Does it not mean to seek help? Furthermore, what does it mean to pray to God in the danger of sin and death? Does it not mean to believe that grace still has a place with God, and that there is a certain help against these evils that lead to destruction? Does not praying against death mean hoping for life? For he who despairs of life prays nothing at all, as if it were a lost cause. So the rule is true that wherever a commandment of the first table is spoken of, or the works of the first table (as prayer is a work of the first table), faith and the hope of the resurrection of the dead are necessarily included. Christ taught us to draw this theology from the simplest words of Scripture, when He says [Matth. 22, 32]: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now GOtt is not a GOtt of the dead, but of the living." Therefore, all who worship this GOtt, who believe in Him and pray to Him, will live even in death. Why? Because it is not a God of the dead who is worshipped, believed in and prayed to, but the God of the living. Therefore, the service of God, faith and prayer in truth include the article of resurrection and eternal life.

No one would have thought that this was indicated in the first commandment if our Doctor, who came from heaven, had not reminded us of it. For the first tablet is not given to unreasonable animals, nor to men who are dead for all eternity, but to men who have a God, who themselves will also live forever with God, for God is not a God of the dead, but of the living. Prayer is a work of the second commandment; if it is done without GOt, it cannot be called a prayer. But since Moses gives this psalm the superscription that it is a prayer, it follows that he prays to God, and that he prays in the hope and confidence of the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Thus shows

In the title itself, it already contains the remedy against the frightening doctrine of death, and mixes both with each other in such a way that neither those who are frightened by this doctrine despair, nor the others become stubborn and secure. For these things must be joined together, that those who are secure may be terrified, and those who are terrified may be raised up and encouraged, being commanded to believe and pray after the example of Moses. The voice of the law frightens by singing to the secure: "In the midst of life we are embraced with death"; but the voice of the gospel raises up again and sings: "In the midst of death we are in life. So much for the content and the title of the psalm, so that the listener may be reminded of what it is about, who and what kind of man the author is, and what his work is, namely prayer. Now let us move on to the psalm.

V. 2.¹) O Lord God, who art our refuge (habituclum) for ever and ever.

This beginning also breathes life and serves to give us a certain hope of resurrection and eternal life, since it calls God, who is eternal, our dwelling place, or, to put it more clearly, a place of refuge to which we can flee and be safe. For if God is our dwelling place, and God is life, and we are its inhabitants, then it necessarily follows that we are in life and will live forever. We know that all this follows from the power of the first commandment with good and certain inference. For who will call God a dwelling place of the dead? Who will consider Him a grave or a cross? He is the life, therefore also those will live, to whom he is a dwelling place. In this way, Moses strengthens the fearful immediately in the entrance, before he begins to thunder and flash terrifyingly, so that they may firmly believe that GOD is a living dwelling place of the living.

1) In the Vulgate and in our Latin text, the title is not counted as one verse, but the second verse of our Bible is counted as two verses. Here, too, we have retained the counting of our Bible. - In the Latin, throughout the entire interpretation, the verse number: krimns vsrsus "tv. is printed as the superscription; we have not retained this.

who pray to him and trust in him. 1)

But it is a wonderful way of speaking (*locatio*), the like of which is nowhere in the Holy Scriptures, that God is a dwelling place. Yes, the Scripture says in other places the contradiction, it calls people temples of God, in which God dwells. Paul says [1 Cor. 3, 16.], "God's temple is in you." This Moses reverses, and says that we are the inhabitants and lords in this house. For the Hebrew word XXXX actually means a dwelling place, as when the Scripture says [Ps. 76:3], "In Zion is His dwelling place," 2) it uses this word Because a house is there for protection, it happens that it is interpreted as a refuge or a place of refuge. Moses intended to speak in this way, so that he would indicate that all hope for us is certainly in God, and so that those who want to pray to this God would firmly believe that they will not suffer tribulation in vain in the world, nor die, since they have God as their place of refuge and the divine majesty as a dwelling place in which they may safely rest forever. Almost in this way Paul speaks, since he says in the letter to the Colossians [Cap. 3, 3.] says, "Your life is hid with Christ in GOD." For it is a much clearer and more glorious saying to say that believers dwell in GOD, than: that GOD dwells in them. For He also dwelt bodily in Zion, but the place is changed. But it is evident that what is in GOD is not changed, nor can it be moved. For God is such a dwelling that cannot perish. Therefore, Moses wanted to indicate the very certain life when he said: God is our dwelling place; not the earth, not heaven, not paradise, but absolutely God Himself, and that is

For and for (a generatione in generationem).

That is, from the beginning of the world to the end of the world, GOD has never abandoned His own. Adam, Eve, the patriarchs, the prophets, the godly kings sleep in this

Erlanger: eonütentnīm instead of: eonüäontnīm.

2) The old translator read *utitur* here instead of *vsritur* in the editions; the former is undoubtedly correct.

Dwelling. For if they have not yet risen with Christ (as I believe), their bodies rest in the graves, but their life is hidden with Christ in God and will be revealed with glory on the last day. In this way Moses indicates the resurrection of the dead and the hope of life against death, even if not yet completely clear, yet with significant (*significanti*) words. For Christ had to be reserved to preach publicly in the new testament the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the dead, which were presented in the old testament in a kind of cover. Moses touches on these things and points to them with his finger, as it were, but afterwards, in inculcating wrath, he is much more eloquent and explicit. For this is what he seeks primarily to accomplish, that men learn to fear God and, terrified by God's wrath and death, humble themselves before God and be prepared for grace. For it is impossible for a man to be moved to fear God if he has not first been shown the wrath of God. But how can this be shown if sin is not shown, which then, as Paul says [Rom. 4, 15.], causes wrath? Thus, at Mount Sinai, the people began to fear the thunderclaps and the terrifying storm that reminded them of their sins and made the majesty of God unbearable to them. This humiliation or fear was pleasing to the Lord. For this is the way to deal with hardened and secure people who do not respect the word of God and all the punishments of ungodliness as well as the rewards of godliness.

Therefore Paul also commands that the word be rightly divided [2 Tim. 2, 15], so that the promises and the threats are not mixed with each other, as the Jews used to do in former times and the papists do today. For even though the prophets threatened the Jews with all plagues (*dura*), they did not take these threats into account and relied on the promises. In this way they extinguished the fear of God and became presumptuous and stiff-necked (*intractabiles*). In contrast, in the papacy, the tyran-

The niche teachers and torturers of souls turn all the wrath and all the reproaches of Scripture against the troubled consciences, whereas these should rather have been straightened up and treated in the gentlest way. Therefore, it is sinned against on both sides, if the word of God is not rightly divided. Therefore the abundance [of threats], of which Moses will make use afterwards, actually goes to those whom Paul [Eph. 4, 19.] calls "reprobates" (*ἀπηλγυγότας*), who, like

The same way that the brute warriors are wont to do, banish the thoughts of death and the wrath of God from their hearts. These cannot be brought back on the right track if one does not make the wrath of God great for them, so that in this way one cuts off the root that carries gall and wormwood (as Deut. 29:18 is written). On the other hand, the exceedingly sweet things that he mentions here in the beginning actually belong to those who fear death, so that they may learn to trust in the goodness of God and rejoice that they have so much life and feeling that they recognize their sins and do not belong to the number of those who either surely despise them or even make a mockery of them. For these let themselves be taught and prove willing to accept the consolation.

If you take up this psalm in this way, it will be pleasant to you and you will realize that it is very useful to you on all sides. At least it often happened to me, when I was a monk, that when I read this psalm, I had to put the book down. But I did not know that these horrors were not held up to a frightened mind, I did not know that Moses was preaching primarily to the hardened and hopeful crowd of those who do not care about God's wrath, death and all their misfortunes, nor do they realize it.

But here again we want to look back at the title. Moses gave this psalm the inscription that it is a prayer. But it appears here that the first virtue of a true and earnest prayer is that it grasps the hope of blessedness and firmly holds that God is merciful, and for this reason has the confidence that with Him is the [right] protection against death. For if

if this were not so, why would he call him our dwelling place? Therefore, these are words of the greatest confidence and the most perfect hope of attaining life, since he dares to say in the midst of the feeling of anger and sin: "O Lord, although you are justly angry with us because of our sins, you have never so forsaken the human race that you have not always preserved a church for yourself, that you have not been the dwelling place and the harbor of those who have placed the hope of salvation in you. This is the first virtue of prayer, that it takes hold of God, that he is merciful and gracious and wants to help.

Who would deny that the Holy Spirit in his own is the best praying person? Since Moses in the most difficult matter, in which he makes himself and the whole world guilty before God, so skillfully wins the favor and takes the judge for the matter through faith in the mercy of God, which he has shown to the Church at all times. Without this faith, prayer cannot be prayer. For how can one pray who does not believe that there is so much goodness in God that He hears those who pray, but either despises God or despairs of God? All the prayers of Pabstism are of this kind. Not only can they not pray in faith, since they do not recognize faith correctly, but they also spoil prayer by relying on the merits and intercessions of the saints. Therefore, let us follow this teacher who prays in the Holy Spirit, that is, in the true faith of the heart, saying: You are our dwelling place. No one can say this from the heart without faith, without the gift of the Holy Spirit.

But it is a necessary lesson, which is held up to us in this example, that we see that faith is necessary for right prayer. When this is there, we triumph. For it is because of faith in Christ that prayer is acceptable and pleasing to God and obtains all things. If you believe that God is your dwelling place, He is truly a dwelling place for you. If you do not believe it, He is not. Therefore, those who are without faith do not only pray without fruit, but their prayer also becomes a

Sin and they only provoke God to anger even more. For it is blasphemy to come before God with your prayer and yet think that you are praying in vain and that God will not hear you.

The other virtue of a right prayer is that it turns to God, not to other, carnal protection, and this is also a work of faith, which not only reconciles us to God, but at the same time protects us against all ungodly teachings and reliance on human shells (*praesidia humana*). For these are two virtues, that one may have God and keep God. He who has faith has a gracious God; therefore, prayer and all other works of the profession are pleasing to God. But it requires great diligence and care, indeed, great kindness on the part of God, that we may keep God in this way and not be overcome by Satan, who challenges us in many ways to see if he cannot in some way distract us from the true God and lead us to trust in human help. That is why Moses expressly says here: "You, Lord, are our refuge."

But why does he add: "For and for"? Certainly, to indicate that One Church would be from the beginning when man was created until the end of the world. For this is that he says: From the day that a generation or an age began, you are our dwelling place, as if he wanted to say: There has always been a church, there has always been a people of God, from the first man Adam to the last, although at times the church was exceedingly weak and so scattered that it could not be seen anywhere, as in Elijah's time, when the godless king Ahab had forbidden the true worship of God and had the prophets killed in great numbers, so that Elijah lamented that he alone was left of the servants of the true God. Therefore, the church was so hidden at that time that it was nowhere but in the eyes of God, who said [1 Kings 19:18] that he had preserved seven thousand who had not bowed their knees to Baal. Thus the church was and remained in the papacy, but it was in truth so hidden that if one had wanted to judge by the appearance that was before one's eyes, it would have seemed to be nowhere. And this is well and carefully to

notice, first, that there have always been, are now, and will be people who praise God, who teach rightly about God, even if they are very few. Secondly, that the Church is not perfect in holiness, without all the ailments and blemishes that the papists dream of. When they hear that the Church is called holy in the holy Christian faith, they think of such a people, which is without all sins and without all aversions. When they then look at their crowd, they must doubt whether it is a church. When they look at us and see the wickedness with which Satan disfigures our churches, they also deny that we are a church and cannot get out of this trouble. The Donatists judged in the same way; they put the fallen under ban and did not allow them to return to their congregations. For they wanted to be such a church that would be without any fault. Therefore, their congregations inevitably sank to a small number. In the same way, the Manichaeans and others have maintained that in truth the church is in eternal life and not in the flesh. In this way one does not have to dispute about the church. For the true church is that which prays, and by faith and earnestly prays, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." The Church is that which increases (*proficit*) from day to day, from day to day puts on the new man ¹⁾ and puts off the old. The Church is that which has received the firstfruits of the Spirit, not the tithes, much less the fullness in this life. We are not yet completely stripped and bare of the flesh, but we are in the process of taking it off and putting it on or becoming better. What is left of sin, therefore, annoys the spiritual (*spirituosos*) Donatists, Manichaeans and Papists, but God is not annoyed by it, because He accepts and forgives it for the sake of faith in Christ.

Therefore, if you want to judge the church, you must not necessarily look at where there are no infirmities and ailments, but where the word is pure, where there is a proper administration of the sacraments, where there are people,

1) Instead of *induit*-*Illr*, *Wohl* should be read *inäutt*.

who love the word and confess the word before the world. Wherever you find this, make sure that the church is there, whether there are few of them or many. It is certain that there will always be some, for otherwise how would God have been our dwelling place from eternity? In this way, Anselmus disputes somewhere quite correctly, and concludes with a strange, but nevertheless good and true reason, that Adam and Eve were Christians and righteous, and that they should have returned to the right way immediately after the fall through faith, so that there would not be a time when the church would have repented. And indeed, in the story of the Fall, Moses shows that Adam and Eve were seized with remorse immediately after the sin and were afraid. But since the promise of the woman's seed was added afterwards, they became righteous in truth through faith in Christ. They fled from God out of fear of the wrath of God and the punishment to come, but God freely sought them out and restored them to righteousness (*revocabat*). This was the first Church born again through the Word and justified by faith in Christinn.

This is brought forward by Anselmus in a masterly way and according to the truth (*disputantur*). For it must always remain and be the church, as also Moses indicates here, since he says that God is the dwelling place of men for and for.

Before the mountains were created, and the earth and the world, you are, O God, from everlasting to everlasting.

Here Moses begins after the manner of his office, hastens to be Moses, and makes both our misery great and the wrath of God. But by this long description he separates the true God from the gods of the pagans, of whom it cannot be said that they have been from eternity and remain in eternity, as if he wanted to say: We do not worship a new or common god, not wood, not gold, but the one who was before the world, who is the eternal and true GOD 2c. Then he also indicates that he is such a God, who has no need of any creature, but is the true God.

He is blissful in himself, since he is before the earth and the world were created. This majesty, which is understood in such short words, no one can explain (*explicare*). For it includes, if someone wanted to explain it in detail, all attributes of the Godhead, which can only be mentioned. For because he is eternal, it follows that he is immortal, omnipotent, blissful, wise, that he has received nothing from anyone, as the Scripture says [Rom. 11, 35.]: "No one has given him anything before," he alone is sufficient for himself 2c.

The *verbum* is more significant than if he had said: before the mountains were created (*creantur*) or made (*fieri*). For it really means the coming of the creature out of the nothing into the something (*aliquid*), as from man another body is born by a miraculous origin; not as a blacksmith makes something out of a material, by preparing the material, either taking something from it or adding something to it, while he forms the material 2c., but as the trees grow out of the earth as it were on the nothing, so that it seems as if everything is in truth more born than formed or created. For he says that the mountains are born, in that GOD begat them, as it were, to indicate what is written in the Psalm from the first book of Moses [Ps. 33, 9. Gen. 1, 3.]: "He speaks, so it comes to pass." For by the Word all things came to be, so that it is more properly regarded as having been born than as having been created or fashioned, because there was no instrument in it.

But 1) actually means to be formed, as the fruit is formed in the womb, without the use of an instrument. But Moses wants to show by the meaning of this verb that the creation of the whole world was, as it were, a birth for God, or that it was a kind of birth at God's command, so that we may learn how easy it was for God to make everything out of nothing, since things grew up, as it were, through His word. For in growing we see that it is exceedingly easy; when a tree grows, it has no trouble about it.

1) This is kMel from

Such a GOd (he says) we have and worship, to such a GOd we pray, at whose behest all created things come into being. What do we fear, then, if this GOt is favorable to us? What do we fear from the wrath of the whole world? If he is our dwelling place, will we not be safe even if the heavens should fall in? For we have a Lord who is greater than the whole world, we have a Lord who is so mighty that all things come into being at His saying, and yet we are so fainthearted that when we have to endure the wrath of a prince or king, yes, even of a neighbor, we tremble and despair, although compared to this King everything else in the whole world is like the lightest dust, which a small breeze moves from its place and does not make it stand. In this way, this description of God is comforting, and fearful hearts should look to this comfort in trials and dangers.

On the other hand, one can also learn from this how great the wrath of God is, as Manasseh remembers in his prayer [v. 4. f.] that rightly everyone must be frightened and afraid of the great power of God, "whose" wrath against the sinners is unbearable. For when the heart realizes that God, so mighty and great, is angry and threatens punishment, where shall it flee? For it will certainly speak with David [Ps. 139, 7. f.]: "Where shall I go before your spirit? and where shall I flee before your face? If I go to heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there also." 2c. For what refuge can there be when he is angry by whose hand all things were made and who is able to do all things? Therefore, those rightly say that this hellish punishment will consist in the fact that the wicked will wish to escape from the hand of God, but will not be able to do so, as Paul also indicates 1 Thess. 5, 3. With such thoughts the nefarious and senseless sinners, who nevertheless live securely in the greatest sins, must be attacked and, as it were, crushed by them with hammers. Let them hear who and how great he is whom they provoke with their sins so that he must carry out the punishment.

see the lightnings and hear the thunderclaps on Mount Sinai, they shall see the earth tremble and everything threaten instant death. But they that know their sins, and tremble before, shall be instructed concerning the tabernacle, and be raised up. For this is the right division of the word [2 Tim. 2:15], that those who are confident and secure should be taught in a different way from those who are already terrified and in fear beforehand, and who also fear everything in which they could be secure. These shall learn to think all the infinite, eternal, almighty dwelling. These shall know that they do not have an enraged devil, but God Himself, who is over all.

Therefore, from this description of God, that he is eternal and omnipotent, immeasurable and infinite, follows also this twofold, that his dwelling or his favor over those who fear him is infinite, and that his wrath or his anger over the secure is also immeasurable and infinite. For the effect is always according to the greatness of the causing cause. Therefore, this verse serves primarily to indicate that the death of man is an immeasurably greater misfortune than the death of other living beings. For although horses, cows and all unreasonable animals must die, they do not die under the wrath of God, but for them death is a kind of temporal misfortune that God has decreed, not for punishment, but because God has otherwise deemed it so good. But the death of man is in truth an infinite and eternal wrath and death, especially since man is such a creature that was created to live in obedience to the Word and to be like God; it was not created to die, but death is appointed as the punishment of sin, as God said to Adam [Gen. 2:17]: "Which day thou shalt eat of this tree, thou shalt surely die the death."

Therefore, the death of men is not like the death of animals, which die according to the law of nature, nor is it a death that happens by chance or would be temporal, but it is a death, that I say so, that is threatened.

1) Thus the Wittenbergers: vere. Jenaer and Erlanger: lers. .

and came from the angry and alienated God. For if Adam had not eaten of the forbidden tree, he would have been immortal. But now, having sinned through disobedience, he is punished with death, which was not created for him, as is the case with the death of the animals that are subject to man, but which was imposed and inflicted on him through wrath, and is due to him because of sin or disobedience. It is therefore a far greater pity to hear that man is destined to death, who nevertheless is created good and intact for life, that he would have his dwelling in GOD. From this blissful state he fell through sin, which Moses endeavors to show in every way by so carefully depicting the person of the one who is angry, in order to frighten the sure and penitent.

V. 3. who let men die, and said, Come again, children of men.

In Hebrew this means: You make man return to the crushing, which is in fact nothing else than what we have translated: "You let men die", therefore I have preferred to use this, because it is clearer. Now as to the meaning, the Fathers here have the opinion that this is about the sin of evil desire, perhaps because they had no other temptations than these animal and carnal ones, for they seldom mentioned others in their writings. Hence it is that our papists, when they speak of original sin, understand nothing else by it than the evil lust of the flesh.

But since this only begins to be felt when men become manly, it follows that original sin is something far more serious, which is and lives also in those who have a lower age, in small children, even in the fruit that still lives in the womb, as the 51st Psalm [v. 7] shows. But because the teachers in general stopped at carnal (psychic) thoughts, and were not able to apply the Scriptures to the more serious and spiritual infirmities of nature, it happens that even with the highest doctrines of Scripture they are exceedingly inferior.

We do not want to be careless with them. Therefore, we want to let them do as they please, but we want to follow the right and proper understanding.

Now the opinion of this passage is this: that Moses wants to teach us that it was through sin that man fell from grace and suffers the penalty of death. He says: you turn man to the crushing, and make him nothing again. Is this not a terrible saying and an exceedingly severe wrath, that man should die by the wrath of God, such a noble creature, which is better than all living beings, and was subject neither to angels nor to devils, but only to the divine majesty; yea, which was created in the image of God, that it should live and reign? This is truly a more severe death and a sadder case than when a cow is slaughtered, especially when you see the reproduction of evil. He says: you turn man to the crushing, that is, the whole human race. For with your one word he understands the whole offspring of the first parents. Thus, what was created for life is now destined for death, namely by God's wrath, and the whole human race has fallen from immortality into eternal death.

But see how carefully Moses speaks, as he attributes this wrath to the Creator, lest Manichaeus come with his foolish multitude, and make two gods, one gracious and good, and the other evil. For he saith not, The devil maketh man to be nothing; but thou thyself, which was before heaven and earth were created. For this was the mad doctrine of Manichaeus, and there is no doubt that even now many are in the same error, who imagine that all good comes from a good God, but all evil from an evil God. Augustine lived in this error for almost nine years. But it is impiety to invent a new God, and in this way to want to escape from God's wrath and to avert it, which has rightly been laid upon us for the sake of sin, as the men of war do who publicly despise death. But what

have you aligned yourself, even though you utterly despise death? Have you thereby also overcome death? Therefore, we should be mindful that the thoughts of Epicurus are not being discussed here as to how to alleviate the evils that cannot be escaped, but that we are being instructed so that we can trace both good and evil back to God alone, and learn how these evils can be overcome. For this is what Moses primarily wanted to accomplish.

Wisely, therefore, he says: "You let men die", that is, it is your work, yes, your wrath, that the whole human race is devoured by death. Not by chance do men come into being, not by chance are they born, not by chance do they suffer, not by chance do they die. For even the cattle does not die even by chance, but according to our will. For the accident of the same is under the dominion of men; how much less is the death and end of men without certain forethought. Therefore, as life is bestowed by certain and divine counsel, so also death is the work of God's wrath, by which he turns this creature to dust (*vertit in contritionem*), and thrusts it out of life into death. Thus, he attributes this effect to God, so that we, thus reminded, do not seek help elsewhere than from him who inflicted the evil. For the same one who struck us will also heal us. For this is the title of our God, "that he killeth and maketh alive, that he leadeth into hell and out again" [Sam. 2, 6], that he (as he says here) turneth men to the crushing, and commandeth the children of men to return, that we, as by him we received life at first, so also by him we finally overcome death. This death is not only the cause of evil desire, but also of all sin. God does use the devil to torment and kill us, but the devil cannot do this if God did not want sin to be punished in this way. We are therefore sheep for slaughter [Ps. 44, 23], subjected to death out of God's wrath for the sake of sin.

The second part of the verse, "And say, Come again, children of men," refers to the fact that, just as men die daily because of sin, so also others are born in the meantime, but in the same condition as those who died. Thus the world perished before the flood of sin, for the Lord had said [Gen. 6:17], "I will destroy all flesh wherein is a living breath," and yet the Lord saith to Noah [v. 14], "Make thee a box, and go in thou, and thy sons, and their wives" [Cap. 7:1, 7]. So he said to Adam [Gen. 2, 17.], "Which day thou eatest of this tree, thou shalt surely die of death," and afterward [Cap. 3, 19.], "Thou art earth, and shalt become earth." For this is the place which devours the whole human race, and yet others are always born into this life who are subject to the same calamity.

This is the opinion of God, which Moses has revealed to us; reason could not have recognized this by itself. Therefore, not only the pagans, but also the monks, have argued a lot about despising death, but in a very bad way. For in this way men become either safe or blasphemers, in that they abandon the fear of God and become displeased with God, as if God were acting tyrannically and abandoning this poor creature to death without reason. Moses teaches far better that even though God rejected man for sin, He did not reject him in such a way that He would not have mercy on him and help him. Reason does not know either of these things: first, that death for sin was laid upon man by God; second, that against this wrath there is a remedy in the mercy of God, that this angry God may be softened and overcome by supplication, that He may renew us to eternal life through the word of grace and His Holy Spirit.

But just as Moses says here: "You let the people die, and say: Come again, children of men", God promises in the first book of Moses at the same time the multiplication or the blessing, and at the same time involves the people in innumerable misfortunes. What he says in the first book of Moses [Cap. 1, 28.]: "Be fruitful and multiply," he says here: "You let the

Children of men return." What he says there [Cap. 3, 19.], "Thou art earth and shalt become earth," he says here: "Thou sufferest man to die." Thus he establishes and at the same time destroys the whole human race in One short utterance, that some shall be made dust and perish, others shall be born into the same misery, until the expected day of our redemption comes, when we shall live in truth. For then not only will all the misery of our wretched flesh be taken away, but also the glory of God will be revealed in His children. Meanwhile, these two works of God remain, that He both corrupts the human race by calamity and increases it by birth.

But even though this life is full of misery, it is extremely comforting that death precedes and life follows, as Moses carefully indicates when he says: "You let men die (this is the first), and say: Come again, children of men" (this is the second or last and best). So it is a misery to be poor, but who would be distressed by this misery if he finally became rich? It is a misery if one must hunger, but with the greater pleasure we enjoy the food afterwards. Now Moses also secretly indicates this hope here, that life will follow after death, and that people will not perish like other living creatures, but that they will die so that they will be humbled, not so that they will remain in death. This hope he shows to those whose hearts are terrified by the contemplation of their sin and the wrath of God. But at the end of the prayer, he will present this doctrine of overcoming death and the wrath of God more clearly.

But the reader's attention must also be drawn to the manner of speaking. For out of special advice Moses keeps the usual way of speaking, since he says: "You say: Come again, children of men. For he has this in mind in the first letter of Moses (Cap. 1, 6. 16.), "God said, Let there be a firmament, sun, moon," 2c. Likewise [v. 26.], "Let us make man," because all these things are created and sustained by the Word. But he also does this, in order to show the greatness

The person who destroys everything and brings everything forth with a single word. What can be considered less than a word? But when God speaks a word, what is said immediately comes to pass. Thus He says to my mother: Receive, and she receives; to me He says: Be born, and I am born.

V. 4. For a thousand years are before you as the day that passed yesterday, and as a night watch.

Here he transfers us from the sight of human things into the Godhead, and on time into such a life, in which there is no time. But this also serves, like the preceding, to show the greatness of the person of God, who is angry with us. For if someone lived as long as Methuselah, who lived to be almost a thousand years old, we would think that such a person would be better off than the others, and that he would not be rejected by wrath. But Moses speaks differently, that not only the wrath of God weighs men down, but also the swift anger, that we die too quickly and do not have the comfort that death or misfortune is delayed or slow, because we have an exceedingly short and yet miserable life, but after that we die an eternal death. For even Methuselah, if you look at his life, did not live a thousand years. But what are a thousand years, if they are in the sight of God like the day that passed yesterday?

What man has ever painted this brevity of life in this way? For it indicates that eS not a run, but as it were a violent hurling fei, by which we are carried away to death. We imagine that seventy years is a long time, and what Cicero says is always true, 1) that no one is so old that he should not hope to live another year. This hope for a longer life is implanted by nature in all people. Hence it comes that people arrange all their intentions and plans as if they wanted to live forever. For through their delusion they make their life an eternal one.

1) Cicero, de senectute: Nemo est tam senex, qui se annum non putet posse vivere.

Life, while death follows our footsteps everywhere and is always very close to us. Thus Moses shows this greatest misfortune, that people do not feel their misery, namely the wrath of God and the shortness of life, which they nevertheless see and experience with their eyes. Today he dies who yesterday had hoped that he would live forty years or more; and if he had lived these forty years, he still would not have dropped the hope of a longer life. Therefore Moses exhorts that we should go out on time and look at our life with the eyes of God, then we would say that the whole life of man, even if it is the longest, is hardly One Hour. I am now one and fifty years old; if I consider this whole time rightly, it has passed as if I had been born on this day. For this is true what the philosophers say: The past is gone, the future has not yet come, therefore we have of all time nothing but what is now; everything else does not exist, because it has either passed or has not yet come.

In this way, Moses makes the wrath of God great over all that men think and judge of it, first (to keep a common word) in intensity, since it makes the death of men worse and more severe than the death of all living beings, because it is imposed by the wrath of God; secondly, in extension, because life passes exceedingly quickly. This whole time from the beginning, when man was created, will be the: Adam, when he rises, will seem as if he had slept only one hour. The eyes of the flesh are beastly; they judge that it is much if someone attains an age of a hundred years, but before God a thousand years are like yesterday, of which nothing is left. This Job also had in mind when he said [Job 14:1]: "Man, born of woman, lives a short time, and is full of restlessness." For it is, as I have said, not wrath alone, but swift wrath and sorrow, and as the person [of God] is infinite (infinita), so brevity is limited to the utmost (finitissima). What the Scripture says elsewhere [2 Petr. 3, 8.]: "A day before

To the Lord is as a thousand years", that goes to spiritual and eternal life.

About what Moses adds about the night watch, it is known that according to the custom of the ancients the night was divided into four watches. As he therefore compared a thousand years with yesterday's day, so he compares the whole life with a small part of the night, which we spend sleeping, as if he wanted to say: If you count the days of this life, they are days gone by; if you count the nights, it is as if it were the fourth part of a night. In this way he not only makes the misery great, but also makes small what was best, namely the return to life. Life is indeed a good creature of God, but because it is so short, and is cut off by death, we rightly lament our misery. But the opinion is not inappropriate, which is followed by others who interpret the parable of the night watch to mean that, just as there is a change in the night watches, so there are also changes in this life. The one who lived today and, as it were, kept watch at his post, is called away by death, as it were, and another follows him. For the guards are not always occupied by the same men of war; he who has kept watch at this hour steps down, and another follows him. Thus, he says, some die, and others are born into life, and follow them as it were, but under the same circumstances as the former, so that when the time of the vigil is completed they depart. Now follow other parables.

V. 5, 6: You let them pass like a stream, and they are like a sleep; like a grass that soon withers, which flourishes early and soon withers, and in the evening is cut down and withers.

The Hebrew verb XXX actually means to flood, and to break in with impetuosity, as the floods are wont to do. It is therefore a very expressive simile, which denotes that the whole human race is swept away as by a flood; thus one human age after another passes away like a roaring stream. Does this not mean this vaunted life or rather the remnants of it?

of the praised life make them wonderfully small? Why are we nevertheless hopeful? Why do we exalt ourselves to such great pride and, in the manner of Epicurus, despise God for the sake of our own pleasure? Why do we not rather learn to consider the wrath of God, and to recognize our life as it is, and how quickly it rushes to destruction, that is, on a drop of blessing into a sea of curse? Do we not know what sleep is, which ceases sooner than we can perceive it? For before we realize that we have slept, the sleep is already gone. In truth, therefore, our life is a sleep and a dream. For sooner than we know that we are alive, we cease to be alive.

The simile of the grass is frequent in the holy scriptures. Therefore, it is obvious that the holy prophets drew and learned a lot from this psalm. David seems to have taken almost the entire 39th Psalm from it, in which he also illustrates this life with a new simile, since he says [v. 7] that people walk like a shadow. And in the 73rd Psalm it says [v. 19. f.], "They come to an end with terror, like a dream, when one awakes," and Ps. 76, 6.: "The proud must be deprived and fall asleep." So Isaiah says [Cap. 40, 6.], "All flesh is hay, and all his goodness is as a flower of the field." Ps. 102, 12.: "My days are gone as a shadow, and I wither as grass." Ps. 144, 4.: "Man is like nothing; his days pass away like a shadow." If this does not teach enough of our life, I do not know what stronger thing could be said. Childhood is the flower of human life; when the time of youth comes, the leaves soon become shapeless. For worry and various dangers hinder the calm flow of life; childhood does not recognize them and therefore does not fear them. Therefore, this part of life seems to be completed in the fastest course, as the poet also says. 1) *Optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi Prima fugit, subeunt morbi tristisque senectus, Et labor, et durae rapit inclementia mortis.*

1) Virg. Georgica, lib. III, v. 66 sqq.

[Just the best time of life, the first, escapes the poor mortal man; after that follows illness and sad old age, and toil and the rough hand of relentless death takes them away]. This life is therefore rightly compared to the flower, which, when it blossoms, has splendid colors and smell, but loses both before the sun sets. Thus this likeness praises the blessing of creation that in such great misery a beautiful little flower nevertheless grows up, but it is lamentable that its leaves so soon perish and wither and cannot keep their natural (*nativam*) color and smell.

The verbum XXX means to change, like Clothes are changed, therefore change clothes are called XXXXX. 2) So he wants to say, that the grass or the flower changes when it begins to be a flower. This verbum is used by Scripture when it says that the heavens and the earth will be changed, to indicate that neither the heavens nor the earth are clothed with their proper adornment in this life, but now they are clothed, as it were, with a hairy garment; but then, when they are renewed, they will be clothed with another, more shining garment. Now the earth is marshy and dilapidated, but in that day it will be as if it were of precious stones and silver. The mountains will be demants, the rivers like the best balm 2c. For the verbum denotes "to change" in a twofold way: either from being into non-being, or from non-being into being. This is also a very beautiful conception, if one understands by the name "grass" the whole human gender, which is transformed very early in the morning from a formless body fruit (*embryone*) into the form of a human being; then it is grass. For the whole human race comes forth (*nascitur*) out of darkness and winter, and as it were out of the dead seed into a living grass, and immediately after it has thus come into being, it is again transformed out of this form into its wind.

2) In the Erlanger: NeUpdos; in the Wittenberger and in the Jenaer: Nelipkns.

The sun changes from summer to winter and from day to night, as Solomon also says [Eccl. 1:5]: the sun rises and sets in a constant change. The verb actually indicates this change, as the year changes from summer to winter, the time from day to night. Thus Jacobus, Cap. 1, 17. says: "With God there is no change, nor change of light and darkness." The night is indeed changed into day, and the day again into darkness, but such things, he says, are not with God. But these changes are different from the change of which this psalm speaks. For those are natural changes, but the change of which this psalm speaks is not a natural change, but one that comes from the wrath of God.

Furthermore, I said above that it is very comforting that in the third verse he puts death first and then adds the word of life to indicate the secret hope that we will be raised again after death and that bodily death will end in a right and eternal life. But at this point the prophet does it differently, and reverses the order, since he describes the whole human race, firstly, as it is in life, and secondly, as it is in death. Early, he says, it blossoms like a flower, but in the evening it changes, is cut off and withers.

What does this change of order mean? Does it convince us that the opinion we have given before is uncertain or wrong? Not at all, but he simply holds up to us our misery as it is in our eyes, not as it is in the eyes of God. Since he said above, "Thou sayest, Come again, children of men," he immediately adds, "For a thousand years are before thee as the day that yesterday was." But it is quite different if we follow our judgment and our reason. For as it is something else to see a seal as it is engraved in a precious stone or in gold, and something else to see it as it is imprinted in wax (for God, that I use this simile, looks at the precious stone itself, we can only see the shape of the precious stone or the imprint in wax with our eyes), so is that which is life before God's eyes,

death before our eyes. What is temporal with us is not temporal with God; what is eternal with us is not eternal with God.

In this way he speaks here of the misery of the people as it is before our eyes. There we see that the one who lives today will die tomorrow. Apart from this death and beyond, reason sees nothing else, and always pays more attention to misfortune and misery than to life. For so are we by nature: ungrateful in good and impatient in evil, very tenacious, that I say so, in the remembrance of evil, and very forgetful in the remembrance of good. For look at the nature of the things among which we live daily, which we see, touch, which we enjoy daily: does not from the earth, yes, from stones and mountains grow the grain, the wine and everything what one needs for the need of this life? In fact, therefore, from nothing something becomes. Thus from the unfruitful and unquenched winter becomes -the fruitful and exceedingly lovely summer, on the night becomes the day. This is the constant change of the creature. But we, as ungrateful people, generally disregard this, and turn our eyes to the other change, which is sadder and more miserable, where something is changed into nothing, and from being to non-being. Moses shows this here by following our judgment and preaching first of the miserable nature of this life, then of death.

Here again we must be reminded of the difference between this change that takes place in the other creatures and that which takes place in us. For the fact that we are changed, and like the grass suddenly falls away, is a change that comes from the wrath of God. The grass, however, is not so changed by the wrath of God, but as it comes up by the decree of God, so it also perishes again, without having any trouble from it and without the wrath of God. Thus the day has its course according to the good will of God; but that we are changed and turned into black night, that happens out of God's wrath. In this way, Moses continues in his explanation of what the emphasis is on in this trade (ad epitasin), and complains, not without tears, of the burden of the

God's wrath, as if he wanted to say: Is it not the utmost pity that man alone, without any example of this in all other creatures, must lead such a miserable life and then perish under the wrath of God? It is already pitiful that man is like grass, and dies sooner than he has learned to live properly. But in this the grass is better and more blissful, which springs up and falls under God's favor and laughter; but we, as he will now say, are consumed by your wrath and bear the unbearable burden of knowing that God hates us because of sin.

V. 7 Your wrath has caused us to perish, and your anger has caused us to perish so suddenly.

This, as I have said, is what is emphasized in this trade, and it shows the difference between man and the other creatures. The fact that man perishes in this way and is quickly carried away to destruction by the wrath of God is not suffered by the grass, not by the flower, not by the birds of the air, not by the animals of the earth, but only by man. He feels that with his death and the extreme misery of this life, sin and the wrath of God are also connected, whereas cattle, sheep and all other living creatures die according to the order of God, which comes from His good pleasure, without their own sin, without the wrath of God. This almost indicates a sense of blasphemy in Moses, for if then, where this is felt, the light of grace is not shown, it is impossible that despair and the highest blasphemy should not follow. For who can remember the wrath of God without grumbling? Even the innocent creature cannot bear its sufferings without complaint. When a pig is slaughtered, it shows its impatience and pain by its cry; when a tree is cut down, it does not fall without a crash. How, therefore, should human nature bear this thought of the wrath of God without tears, without grumbling, without the highest impatience? How should it endure with equanimity the death that it knows it suffers for sin's sake and out of God's wrath?

Therefore, reason takes either the path of contempt or the path of blasphemy. Among the colloquia of Erasmus is a dialogue to which he gave the title "Epicurus". In it he disputes the Christian religion, that it has the stone of Tantalus 1), since after the misery of this life it also threatens eternal fire. What can there be, he says, for a more suitable remedy against this evil than unbelief, or the nonsense that one does not believe that this is true? In this way the Verminst disputes. For it seems to be unbearable and unworthy of divine wisdom and goodness that, after the troubles of this life, eternal death should also be feared, and that out of anger, because God is also angry with the people so burdened with misfortune. Reason cannot bear these thoughts without falling into blasphemy. Therefore, Epicurus advises that you either become a nonsense or an unbeliever, and thus free yourself from the feeling of anger and sin in misfortune and in death. But what a sacrilegious counsel is this! For how? if you either cannot be faithless, and fear that after this life you may have to feel that what you despise here is true? or if you cannot be so senseless that you never think of this future danger? Therefore, nature can do nothing but be horrified and unwilling that such a Lord should still be left over us [after this life], whom we must fear even after death, as Vellejus speaks in Cicero: In this way he sets an eternal lord upon our necks.

Therefore, the example of Moses must be diligently remembered, so that we may learn to moderate and govern this groaning of our heart when we feel the wrath of God and death. For it is not an evil to feel the wrath of God in this way, only we must not fall into the folly of either despising or blaspheming God in tribulation, although it is impossible that the sighs of the saints in such afflictions should not have something of blasphemy about them. For can

1) Besides having to suffer constant hunger and thirst, Tantalus also had a rock hovering over him that threatened to collapse.

Do we excuse Job when he calls the day on which he was born a cursed one [Job 3:3] or Jeremiah [Cap. 20:17] who is angry that he did not die in his mother's womb? Jerome also uses a very harsh word when he says that men are more wretched than all animals, since after all other misfortunes in this life they still have to expect or at least fear eternal death. These are words that have come out of a heart that has become angry and unwilling because of the feeling of evil. But it is not an evil sign to be angry in this way, only this movement must be tempered and governed in the right 1) way. For just as a young man feels unchastity, but God forgives him for it if he either keeps this feeling in check and controls it or takes a wife, so those movements of a grumbling, blaspheming, doubting heart also cling to Christians, but they must be kept in check so that they do not, as with the ungodly, amount either to contempt of God or to despair.

Augustine says: "It is worse to be than not to be; but if you consult with yourself, you will say that the contradiction is better. These thoughts are not far from blasphemy, especially if you indulge in them. But it often happens, and I have seen this happen to many, that inexperienced people, when they felt these thoughts of blasphemy, almost died. Therefore, it is necessary to control them. But this is the right control of them, that you firmly believe that you are not rejected by God because you feel them. For although there is some cause of such thoughts in us, for they are the fruit of original sin, they are nevertheless also promoted and increased by the tempter, Satan. Thus it often happens to godly youths and virgins that they become inflamed with unchaste thoughts, even against their will. For when a man is seized by lust, he is completely seized, so that he sees nothing else,

can hear and think, than what the rut gives him. Thus the hearts are taken over by anger, worry, hatred and similar movements. In such temptations dominion [over ourselves] is necessary, that we strengthen ourselves by the Holy Spirit and take care that we will not perish for the sake of it, because we feel such things. For it is not always the fault of evil desire and one's own infirmity that a young person is inflamed with unchastity, that the heart is stirred up by anger and other sinful inclinations, but such things often happen from Satan, who drives hearts by his goads and inflames the flesh against their will.

For it often happens that you heartily desire to be freed from the impure impulse of the heart, and yet are unable to do so. Then we must follow this advice: first, that we do not despair of our salvation, as I said before; second, that we resist such thoughts, do not approve of them or indulge in them, and at the same time implore help from God through earnest prayer. For such thoughts do not come to you for the sake that you should judge according to them and follow them, but that you should resist and fight against them with prayer. But as I have said of the greater temptations of unchastity, of wrath 2c., so must this temptation of blasphemy be held. For the devil disguises himself as an angel of light and in the form of God in order to lead us away from prayer and words, and thus to attack and overcome us uncovered. When he has challenged us with blasphemous thoughts, he immediately accuses us: "Look at your heart," he says, "what is it like? Are you not a sinner? This the heart must admit. Then he adds something else: "So God is angry with you, for how should God not be angry with sin? If you soften a little here, he overpowers you, and truly, many have Satan killed in this way.

Therefore, prudent behavior (gubernatione) is necessary, that you oppose the enemy, and firmly maintain that your weakness is known to God, and that God will not be offended by it if you do not let it take the reins. But that you are a sinner

1) Erlanger: eerte instead of: eorta.

If you are a man of God and acknowledge this with humble confession, this is a pleasant humiliation for God, since he taught this through Moses and the prophets and revealed his law so that he could humiliate us in this way. But what Satan brings in this humiliation, either to despair or to contempt and blasphemy, you shall regard as only sufferings and not real things or a judgment passed [by God]. Thus, when a son is chastised by his father, he does not think that the rod is a sign of disinheritance, but even though he suffers the rod, he still holds that his father is and remains his father. Thus, he who is burdened with serious illness puts the illness out of his sight, sees and hopes for healing. In this way the thoughts of blasphemy are indeed frightening, but nevertheless they are good, if one only guides them rightly and uses them well. For they include the inexpressible groaning that penetrates into heaven and forces the divine majesty, as it were, to forgive and make blessed. This can be felt, as can all arid spiritual things; it cannot be said, nor learned without experience. That is why Dionysius is rightly ridiculed, who wrote about the negative and the affirmative (*negativa et affirmativa*) theology. Afterwards he describes the affirmative theology as being: God is something (*est ens*); the negative one is: God is not something (*est non ens*). But because we want to describe the denying theology correctly, we must say that it is the holy cross and the temptations, in which God is not seen, but nevertheless the groaning is there, of which I have just said. But it is useful that this be often held up and impressed upon us, for the sake of those who either experience such temptations themselves, or others who are in them, must be comforted, as it is commanded in Scripture that the fainthearted should be comforted, and that the smoldering wick should not be quenched, but guarded. For the Holy Spirit knows that the devil is equipped in many ways, and at every hour endeavors to tempt us with those thoughts of despair and sadness.

to attack. Therefore, he reminds and exhorts everywhere that Christians should instruct and uplift one another with sayings of the Holy Scripture (*divina auctoritate*).

Therefore, also among us all diligence and effort shall be put into it, that you hear me according to God's commandment, and I comfort you when you are in battle and danger; that you believe me, and I in turn believe you when I am in similar danger. I am indeed a doctor, and many confess that they have been not a little encouraged by me in the holy scriptures, but it has often happened to me that I have felt that I have been helped and raised up by the word of a brother who in no way thought to be like me. For the word of a brother, which is held forth from the Scriptures at the time of danger, has tremendous weight. For the Scriptures have the Holy Spirit as their inseparable companion, who moves and directs hearts in many ways through the Word. Thus Timothy, Titus, Epaphroditus comforted St. Paul; also the brethren who went out to meet him from Rome, though he was in many ways more learned and skilled in God's Word. For even the greatest saints have their times when they are weak, but others are stronger. Now this is the constant law and rule of Christ, that the strong should bear the weaker, as the bones bear the flesh. For just as no one throws away his nose for its own sake, because it is full of unclean separation (*phlegmate*) and is, as it were, the cloaca of the brain, so also the weak in the time of their weakness are a part of the kingdom of Christ, and are not to be thrown away for its own sake, but must be cared for, healed, and raised up.

But we want to return to Moses. He is now, in truth, in the most difficult part of the bargain (*in epitasi negotii*); therefore, he freely presents his thoughts to God, so that he may the more easily persuade him to forgive and to make him blessed. What, he says, are we men whom your wrath kills? Truly our death is more dreadful than all death and sorrow, not only of other living creatures, but also of other men. For what is this, that Epicurus dies, who is not

not only does not know that there is a God, but also does not recognize his misfortune, which lies on his neck? But Christians and people who fear God realize that their death and all other misfortunes of this life are the wrath of God. Therefore, they are forced to fight and contend with the angry God in order to keep their blessedness. But what are the people who are already burdened and oppressed with the miseries of this life before? Even if this were not the case, the fear of death alone would be a great misery. For no other kind of living being is so tormented by the fear of death as man.

But what do I say about unreasonable animals? Consider the life of godless men, of Epicurus and his like, with whom it is in truth as Job 21:9, 13 says: "Their house is at peace from fear, and God's rod is not over them. They grow old in good days, and are scarcely a moment afraid of hell."

But the godly and the saints are martyred all their lives with many sorrows of death and other things, they are harassed by Satan with daily fear and uncertainty of life. For they recognize that God is angry with sins and that sin is the cause of all misery. This is not recognized by reason and the pagans. If we also experience such thoughts of fear and wrath of God, we must not despair for that sake, as if this were an evil sign. For afterwards we shall hear that Moses also asked this of God, that he might think of this wrath. For we see how frightening the security of the hearts of men is, that although they are reminded of themselves and of other people by daily and exceedingly hard miseries, yet they do not inquire of GOD, as it is said in Isaiah [Cap. 9, 13.], "The people turn not to him that smiteth them." For they are like sows, and entirely without feeling, and do not perceive that this misery is laid up by God.

But God wants us at least to recognize our misfortune and to be corrected by the plagues. Therefore, when you realize that out of God's wrath for the sake of sin you have fallen upon

If you are afflicted in various ways and therefore sometimes grumble out of impatience, do not lose heart. For the cause does not lie with you alone, but the devil is also involved, who instructed man in paradise that he should not be satisfied with what God had commanded, but should also ask about the cause. Therefore, such speeches arise from impatience: Why were we born? Why is our situation not the same as that of the animals? 2c. Even truly holy people are plagued with this temptation, and this temptation was not entirely unknown in the monasteries, for it was called the spirit of blasphemy, and Gerson consoles against it in various ways. He uses a number of similes: just as we do not care for the hissing of geese, so we must despise it and cast it out of our hearts, even though we feel it. For just as a barking dog only becomes more irritated and rages more fiercely the more earnestly you make it your business to fight it off, so also the advice is given that one should not provoke such thoughts by pursuing them. Something similar is read in the "Descriptions of the Lives of the Fathers" (*vitis patrum*), for there one of them teaches that such thoughts are like the birds that fly in the open air, and says that it is not in our power to resist them, that they should not fly here or there, but that it is in our power that they should not make their nests in our hair. So also those thoughts originated from another cause, which lies outside of us, namely from the devil. Therefore it cannot be prevented that they should not invade us, but we can beware that we do not indulge in them and thus become entangled in sin. This is very wisely taught and from a great experience in spiritual things.

Therefore, we too should comfort ourselves in this way. When Satan shoots his arrows into our hearts, we should think that they are thoughts of the devil and of our weakness, which by nature is inclined to impatience and grumbling. So the devil has an open window to attack us. But it must not be due solely to the raging of the

devil, but also on the counsel of God. For he has promised mercy to the hearts that are so wounded, and for this reason he allows us to be humbled, so that we may sigh and pray to him. Thus he led Moses into the extreme distress at the Red Sea, not so that he would perish there and the Egyptians would return unharmed to their own after the extermination of the Jews, but so that Moses would pray and be saved, who alone had to bear the guilt, as if the people had fallen into this distress according to his will. But Moses feels this danger. Although he did not say anything with his mouth, the Lord nevertheless said to him [Ex. 14:15], "What are you crying out for?" Therefore, just as Moses did not perish in that danger, nor was he challenged for the sake that he should perish, but that he might be helped by the Spirit, and cry out to God with all his heart and be saved, so also those will not perish but be saved who feel the thoughts of blasphemy, yet control them and keep them in check, as I said above. For just as the tinder of unchastity is in the young, so the devil is at work in those who are spiritual (*spiritualibus*), to bring them to despair. For when he sees that people are dealing with it, that they would like to become blessed, then he strikes the hearts with thoughts of wrath and with examples of the terrible judgment of God, which subjects us to sin and death, so that they should begin to dispute with themselves like this: Why has God so burdened us with eternal misery? If someone lends his heart and ears to this disputation, he will gradually be so filled with the feeling of God's wrath that he will have nowhere to stay because of fear and terror.

Therefore, when this is felt, it must be considered that it is now time not to despair but to sigh. Therefore, sigh for salvation, which will surely come. But the reason why God allows this to happen, order Satan to find out from God. For this affliction and all other trials are laid upon us for this reason, that we may be humbled, not that we may be damned.

And this is also the reason for Moses to set up his sermon so sharply and to make the misery of the people great above all other misery, because it is connected with God's wrath. Therefore, those who do not raise themselves up by trusting in the mercy of God will feel nothing but either despair or blasphemy. But God's will is not that we should despair, but that through Christ we should overcome these things, just as the apostles and other saints overcame similar trials. Thus the holy virgins felt that they were women (*suum sexum*), the martyrs felt the pain of torture, but both mastered and overcame this feeling. In this way, all the saints feel this anger, but through Christ they also overcome it. For this feeling belongs to the mortification [*of the flesh*] (*mortificationem*). It is a great evil to be consumed, but to be consumed by the wrath of God is indeed something that human reason does not know how to overcome, unless it is instructed by the Word of God and supported by the Holy Spirit.

The second part of this verse, "and thy wrath maketh us to pass away suddenly," actually speaks of the terror of death; if it were not there, death would in truth be a kind of sleep. For just as a dead serpent retains the form of a serpent, but being without venom, cannot harm, so death would in truth be dead if it were without this terror, which is in truth, as it were, the poison of death. Therefore, we must pray that we do not have to suffer this terror in the last hour, but rather in life, even though we cannot bear it without grumbling. Thus Paul says [2 Cor. 7:5], "Outward strife, inward fear." But this fear is necessary throughout life to kill and awaken the old man, lest he snore in safety. Therefore, just as children who cannot be corrected by the rod must be chastised with knives, so those who cannot be corrected by corporal punishment, nor taught the fear of God, must be punished with the

The people should break with the hellish fire and the feeling of God's wrath, so that they do not remain unintelligent. But as soon as they feel the wrath of God, then they should be told to hope, and they should be raised up. Now this is the one misery that makes us more miserable than all other creatures. Although they are also mutable and subject to death, they are not changed in the wrath of God, as we, who live in the terror of divine wrath, are. Now follows the other sorrow, that we are also burdened with sins. The rest of the living beings do not feel and suffer this misery either.

V. 8 For our iniquity you set before you, our unconcealed sin in the light before your face.

He said that man lives in fear of death; why is that? Because we have sin, but death is the wages of sin. Therefore, when the conscience feels sin, it cannot hold and conclude otherwise than that it has an angry God and therefore must die. The word means our hidden or secret. This, he says, thou hast set before thee, as it were, in the clear light of the sun, and seest it, and "let me not be innocent," as Job [Cap. 9, 28.] says. This is also not far from blasphemy, especially when you look at the heart to whom: it speaks such words. It shows indeed that it desires to be free from sins, but, it says, that is impossible for me. Through whose fault? Certainly God, who sees our most secret, forgives nothing, takes everything into account, inscribes even the smallest thing in his debt book. This thought causes even our best works to displease us, since heaven and earth seem to be full of our sins. This is what matters in this thing that God does with us, so that we walk in the feeling of our sins and death. But it is not evil, as I also said above, that one should feel this, complain about his misery, and judge that there is nothing but damnation with us. Of course, you may complain and groan in this way, then also make an effort to lead and arrange your life according to this groaning, then it will happen that you will feel salvation.

Furthermore, it is important to note this statement that no man can see all his sins, especially considering the greatness of original sin. And this is not to be wondered at. For who can sufficiently describe only the one sin of unchastity, which is known to all, even if we were all poets, equal to Virgil or Ovid? That is why also Solomon says [Proverbs 30:19] that a man's way with a maid is unsearchable, that is, no one can explain the heart movements of lovers or express them sufficiently in words. How much less, therefore, can the other more serious and spiritual sins be sufficiently recognized, as there are the impatience in repulsions, blasphemies, murmuring against God 2c. How deep an abyss is unbelief alone? In truth, therefore, sin is as great as he who is offended by sin. But heaven and earth cannot contain him. He therefore rightly calls sin something hidden, whose greatness cannot be grasped by the mind. For like the wrath of God, like death, sin is also infinite. But Moses wants us to learn and believe this, so that we may be terrified and sigh to God for mercy, so that we will not be among the number of those who despise, but, crushed and humiliated and ready to die, hope through the grace of God to attain eternal glory that is important beyond all measure [2 Cor. 4:17].

Those who are thus crushed and humbled by the hammer of the law can be instructed and taught to deflect those arrows of Satan when he provokes us, that we should investigate the causes why God deals with us in this way, why he exercises all his power against this dry leaf, as Job speaks [Cap. 13, 25]. These disputations may well occur to you, but do not let them frighten you. Rather, hold that these too are punishments of sin and arrows of the devil, which are repelled with the shield of faith, and serve 1) that our security and hope may never be-

1) Instead of val⁴nt6 should be read vulentek, referring to xosnas and Za⁴ittas. The former reading could only go to üüei. The then resulting sense seems to us to be inappropriate.

that is caused by the original sin. Therefore, as much as can be said about the misery of men, so much is said here by Moses, and I do not believe that this can be stated in better or weightier words. For he takes his sermon here to the extreme, that the cause of this misery is sin, which, although it is hidden from us and from the whole world, is nevertheless placed before God's face and in bright light. What can be said that is more weighty? Nevertheless, Moses is different from other blasphemers because he still maintains the childlike sighing against God, his Father. He does not turn his face away from God; he does not belittle God, he does not blaspheme, but looks straight at Him and in a childlike manner he murmurs and complains. The wicked do not do this in such a sense of God's anger, but because they throw away all hope in God's goodness, like Judas, Cain and Saul, they therefore burn with intense hatred against God, blaspheme God in their hearts, and sin more and more. Now follows:

V. 9 Therefore all our days pass away by thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale.

The verbum XXX (which we have translated by "to pass") contains an extraordinary diminution or disparagement of human life. For it expresses that our life does not turn its face toward us as if it were coming, but rather its back, as it flees in the quickest course, as the poet says in a delicate manner: 1)

**Optima quaeque dies
miseris mortalibus aevi
Prima fugit, subeunt
morbi etc..**

So, if you count all the years, from the sin of Adam to the last point of time, you will see that all those years with the whole human race are nothing but a shifting and fleeing. It is not a constant or fixed duration, but as the poet says: 2)

Tempora labuntur, tacitisque senescimus annis.

[The time passes, and will become old, while

while the years pass quietly].

Moses did not teach this first, nor did he teach it alone, but he received it from the fathers, who compared the whole life to an extremely fast flight. But this is by far the most important thing, that he not only says that life flees, but that this flight is also a punishment that God has imposed in his wrath. Other living creatures also have this evil upon them, that their life does not last very long, but with the animals this does not happen out of God's wrath. Therefore, Moses here directs his attention in his own way, and thus reminds us of our suffering, so that the hearts, frightened by such great dangers, may cast off all security, and at the same time learn to pray in the fear of God.

That he adds: "We spend our years like chatter" or a speech, this also serves to diminish our very miserable life. Just as a poem or rather some verse of Virgil passes by when it is recited, so does our life. Furthermore, this simile is very appropriate on both sides, whether one understands it from the essence or from the movement. As for the essence, no one knows what speech is. It is a sound by which the ears are struck, but one does not know its beginning or end, what it is or where it comes from. Before you begin to speak, it is nothing; when you have ceased to speak, it is also nothing; apart from the sound, we know nothing of what speech is. This, he says, is the nature of our life; it is, as it were, a kind of echo that ends and breaks off in the shortest time. If you prefer to understand the simile in terms of movement, it fits well. For what is faster than the human voice? The face is indeed quicker, but it only catches hold of one object, for it cannot be directed to different objects in an instant in order to recognize them correctly. But the speech comes out of the mouth in an instant and perfectly, and enters all ears in the same instant or time. This was the reason why the poets attached wings to Mercurius-

1) Virg. deoi~noa, lid. III, v. 66 kq. Cf. above Col. 760. (Erl. 18, 294.)

2) Oviäiilik

. VI.

and known is the epithet in Homer: Winged words, and Ovid 1) says: *Volat irrevocabile verbum*. [There rose the word, which cannot be called again].

Therefore, if one may understand the essence of speech or the movement of it, it is an exceedingly great diminution of the brevity of life that we know neither the beginning nor the end of our life, but just as a sound and a noise is produced and fades away (*absolvitur*), where neither anything is there before, nor anything remains after, so, says Moses, is our life. The nightingale is a small bird, and yet it fills heaven and earth with its voice. But whence this voice is, where it begins, where it ends, you do not know: such is our life. Who, therefore, should be hopeful of riches, power and dignity, since these things are not only transitory (*fluxiles*), but also our life is exceedingly short?

V.10. Our life lasts seventy years, and when it comes to the end, it is eighty years, and when it has been delicious, it has been toil and labor, for it passes quickly as if we were flying away.

If we make this comparison between our years and God's, seventy years are not equal to a moment or a dot. But Moses wants to compare them among themselves, as he says [in the Vulgate], in *ipsis*, there are seventy years of toil and labor. Further, "seventy" and "eighty years" must be understood according to the physical point, not the mathematical. For he does not want to designate exactly seventy or eighty, as if there were nothing below or above them, but since people generally reach this age, he sets this common goal. For what is above this age does not deserve the name "life," since then everything that belongs to natural life comes to an end: men enjoy neither food nor drink with pleasure, are almost unfit to do any business, and are preserved only for their own torment. But the preceding years, if you look to God, are like-

With us they are, as it were, flying, during which one feels nothing but effort and work. Now notice here whether it is not a great pity that, although we all suffer and experience this, there are nevertheless very few who, I say, feel this sensation, as it is said in the German proverb that the old fools are the best (*senes stultos stultissimos esse*). For how many are there who, even though they have come to the misery of this old age, realize that old age, death and similar things are punishments? Yes, in strange foolishness they become young, not only according to the senses, but also according to the desires. O misery upon misery!

But here the question is raised whether at this time the years of life are less than at the time of Moses, and whether at the time of Moses all in general reached the seventieth or the eightieth year. Moses did reach the one hundred and twentieth year, but David did not reach the eightieth. Therefore, he sets this certain number of years, as it were, as a means for people to reach in general. Our age nowadays has not become much less, if only we lived moderately after the manner of those people and did not spoil our health and life by inordinate indulgence and eating and drinking. They lived according to the right measure in the highest simplicity, therefore it was also easy for them to bear the expenses, and they came to their right age, to which also we would perhaps arrive, if we controlled the body with the same moderation, although I do not disapprove of the opinion of those who think that in our time something has gone away from the age of man. Before the Flood, five hundred or four hundred years was the physical average that men generally attained. For the fathers came up to eight hundred and nine hundred years. But as after the Flood much of the age of man has departed, so it is probable that our time has departed somewhat from the time of David.

Therefore, just as Moses set a common goal of seventy years, so we can set forty or fifty years in our time. For there are

1) This word is found in Horatii *Lpistolatum* lid. I, ep. XVIII, v. 71.

very few who reach the age of sixty, and they are considered to be at a great age. And it is not to be wondered at; for if one wants to reckon according to our intemperate way of life in comparison with the moderate and simple life of those people, it is rather to be wondered at that some can reach the sixtieth year. For children with weak bodies must necessarily be born of intemperate parents. Thus it is easy to judge from intemperance in eating and drinking alone that something has gone out of the life of the people. But what can be said here about the infirmities of the constitution of the body (*complexionum*) through the influence of the heavenly bodies (*ex causis coelestibus*), I leave to the philosophers and the mathematicians; for us daily experience is sufficient. It is not necessary to discuss the complaints of old age here; Cato, in the writings of Cicero, advocates with great earnestness that they are very small [, but in vain]. 1) For the thing counts more than words, and the general experience is the opposite. Is not this a great complaint, that an old man is deprived of almost everything by which this life is seasoned?

Cicero introduces a story about Sophocles from Plato. When someone asked him, since he was already very old, if he still cared for pleasure, he answered: "God forbid! I really liked to escape from him, like from a rough and angry master. Cicero praises this word very much; but if we consider the matter in the right way, we will see that in place of the one youthful pleasure (*libidinis*) with the ancients, I say, a hundred heavier and worse lusts (*libidines*) come, envy, anger, worry, impatience, suffering, which they inflict, evil examples [which they give] 2) 2c. The comic poet therefore rightly says: old age is in itself a disease. With truth, therefore, it is called a burdensome life, which is a burden to itself and to others. If it now

there have been some people who have lived out their old age in such a way that it has neither been burdensome for others nor unpleasant for themselves, what are they compared to all the rest? Because, as it is said in the proverb: A swallow does not make a summer. The two words XXX and XXX are commonly taken figuratively, but here they stand in their proper meaning of Job 5:7. [Vulg.] "Man is born to labor [XXX] or complain, as the bird is born to fly." But the Scriptures elsewhere use these words for a fictitious worship of God or idolatry, and this because all superstition and idolatry in truth afflict men, as we call in German the "devil's martyrs," who without need impose many complaints upon themselves, and there is a German proverb that it costs much more trouble and labor to get into hell than into heaven. 3) For false religion or idolatry cannot have true joy of heart and peace in the Lord. Therefore, it necessarily brings with it a restless and anxious heart. Therefore, these terms fit idolatry very well. Thus, the whole life is toil and labor, unless these ills are alleviated by faith and the hope of mercy in the born-again, who are new men and cannot grow old.

What is written in the second part of the verse: "It flies quickly as if we were flying away" does not need a long explanation. For we learn from experience that this saying is true. When I was a child, I was told this fable: a patriarch had asked that God tell him how long he would live. When he heard that he would live a thousand and five hundred years, he began to build a hut in solitude, which would be sufficient for him alone, and not a house. Whoever invented this fable, surely wanted to indicate by the same that even a life, which is so many

3) The devil's martyrs suffer more than Christ's martyrs, and hell must be earned more sourly than heaven. Cf. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. VIII, 1891.

1) Inserted by us.

2) Added by us. After *movent* a comma is to be put, which is missing in all editions. Accordingly, the translator has: "pain they received from evil examples" 2c. Surely such pain is not sin?

years, was nothing but a flying and an exceedingly swift passing; but now men build their houses in such a manner as if they would live here forever.

V. 11: Who believes that you are so angry? And who is afraid of such your wrath?

This is a summa with which he concludes this sermon. There are very few, he says, who contemplate the greatness of your wrath and your so terrifying fury, the others live safely while your fury is present, reigns and is above them. They take no heed that they are in sins, and that thou art angry with them. They feel their misfortune, but do not recognize and believe it; they live like unreasonable animals, as if it were just the other way around with them, and they were in the highest grace, in eternal life. So they put all the evils of life out of their sight and put them out of their mind, and surely they either blaspheme or despise. They live seventy years; they hold them as high as if they were an eternity. Yes, one can find people who are subject to the fact that they want this so miserable life more than that life, and are unwilling about the fact that they are created for immortality, as one tells of a certain farmer. Hearing many things from his priest about heaven and life in the community of the blessed, he said: "What do you praise heaven for? if only we had grain! What heaven, if we had flour here! Such people do not feel anything of death, but are in truth unintelligent like the cattle, consider everything as nothing. This blindness Moses deplores here, that people are so senseless that they do not recognize their greatest evils, even if they feel them; but like servants who are used to suffer blows, they are not improved by God's ruth. Such people, says Moses, are we all; we suffer from an incredible dullness of heart that we do not recognize the evils we feel.

And here he shows why he preached this sermon and for the sake of whom, namely for the sake of the ignorant sinners, so that they may be brought to the knowledge of their misery. For this is the greatest misery,

That we humans live in such great hardships, of which there is no number, and in such a short life, and in the danger, yes, in the certain occurrence of eternal death, and yet do not feel this and do not sufficiently recognize it. Who can sufficiently explain this so great stupor? The philosophers describe man in such a way that he is a rational living being (animal). But who will say that this is true in theology? For there man is in truth a pillar of salt, like Lot's wife, because he does not recognize the great wrath of God, and throws himself unreasonably into a thousand dangers of death, yes, often with knowledge and will. Moses holds this misery of ours before our eyes, that we are accused and condemned before God, so that we may open our eyes and, believing this, lay down our security and ask for salvation, since we are so oppressed by eternal death and sins, and yet do not feel it if we are not reminded, but if we are reminded, do not believe. For since we do not recognize nor believe those temporal things which pertain to the misery of this life, how much less will we believe those spiritual things which pertain to eternal death and life? These are great things, he says, but who believes them?

Who is afraid of your grimace?

Your anger is as great as you yourself are, therefore the anger is infinite and the wrath immeasurable, and yet man does not feel this, but like the one in the comedy thunders towards the thundering Jupiter (oppedit), so those people despise God in the most certain way. In the midst of life we are in death, and yet we do not fear, do not believe, but walk along quite safely even when all dangers are already on our necks 2c. But this lament includes the request that Moses wishes that this pernicious security be taken from his heart and from the hearts of all men, and that the hearts be inflamed with faith, so that they believe this to be true and are terrified because of the wrath of God that is so great. For those who recognize and firmly hold that this is true, they improve and show themselves willing against their teachers; the others remain in the

They are sure to condemn and despise their dangers until they suffer them. Therefore, this feeling of death and wrath, this humiliation and contrition is desirable.

V. 12: Teach us that we must die, that we may become wise (*Doce nos, ut sciamus numerum dierum nostrorum, ut incedamus corde sapienti*). 1)

So far we have heard that Moses indicated from the beginning that after this life there is another life, and not just another life, but either a life of wrath or a life of grace. For otherwise it would be in vain to call upon this King who is outside this life, indeed outside this world, if there were not another life and your other world. For GOD is not seen with human eyes, as the emperor; neither is He heard, as a man, but He is outside the realm of our eyes, yea, also outside the thoughts of the human heart, as is clearly seen from the books of the heathen; for though they speak of GOD, yet they speak in doubting malediction. Then, all that they do in service to God, they do only for the sake of this present life; they do not think of the future. It is a common saying in the schools of theologians that there are not many testimonies in the Old Testament about eternal life and the resurrection of the dead. But if you look at how the prophets and other saints call upon God, who is apart from all that we see, you will soon realize that it is precisely by calling upon God that they confess that there is another life after this life, whether it be a life of grace or of wrath.

In this way, the first tablet also teaches clearly, since it teaches that God is, and is both merciful to those who fear Him, and a very severe judge against the sure and impenitent, that not only after this life follows another life, but-

1) This is Luther's translation (not that of the Vulgate), which also corresponds to the first German translation of the Psalter. Cf. St. Louis edition, vol. IV, 80. Only it seems that there "einhergehen" should be read instead of: "eingehen".

but also that the condition of the future life will be such that it will be either under your grace or under your wrath. Such testimonies are certain, and not so rare as the school theologians have dreamed. But we have recalled above in what purpose Moses relates both our whole life and death to the invisible God who is outside all visible things, namely, so that he may drive us to fear and reverence the invisible God, likewise so that he may kindle in us the fear of the wrath to come and the hope of eternal life. And in this respect the books of the pagans are different from the books of the holy Scriptures, in that the pagans cannot be certain that God is and cares for people even after this life, as Moses shows here, and will show even more abundantly and clearly in what follows. For now we come to the second part of this psalm.

In the first part, he has presented all the miseries of the human race very diligently. But he sees that among the other miseries this is not the last, that either the wickedness or the punishment of original sin is so great that we do not even feel these miseries we suffer. That is why the prophets and the most holy people are forced to pray that people would at least recognize their misery. Therefore, even if we call original sin a characteristic or a disease, it is truly the most extreme evil that we not only suffer eternal wrath and death, but also do not even recognize what we suffer, so that prayer is necessary for the whole human race, that it may consider what it sees, yes, what it actually experiences, that this life is not only very short, but also subject to many adversities, and that, after these bodily hardships, eternal ones are to be expected. It would be bad enough if only original sin were hidden, but that the punishment of sin itself is hidden is not merely a leprosy that feels nothing, but in truth the nature of a stone.

Therefore, Moses asks that the Lord teach us to number our days. This is not to be understood as if he wished that

He does not want the day or the hour of death to be indicated, but rather that people reflect in truth on their life, how miserable and pitiful it is, that it escapes like a shadow, and that one must spend eternity either under wrath or under grace. He wishes that we all become such calculators, so that we do not invent years without number, as tyrants in particular are wont to do, that they are either intent on a very long life, or hope that they can survive all dangers in an unhappy hour. This is the highest misery, when the present death and the other urgent miseries are either disregarded or even despised. Against this misery he prays that we may be instructed by the Holy Spirit to number our days, and that we may be afflicted by the temptations of death and other dangers, so that we may consider what we are, and also consider a hundred years of our life equal to a mathematical point and the shortest moment, as indeed it is when we value our life according to the right way, which Moses teaches here.

If I did not see that Moses prayed for these things here with such great earnestness and with such care, it would never have occurred to me that it was necessary to ask for them. For I thought that the hearts of all men would be so afraid and terrified as I am in terror. But to the one who looks at this more closely, it becomes clear that one can hardly find ten out of ten thousand who look at it this way, the whole rest of the people live as if there is neither a death nor a God. This is the greatest and most lamentable misery, that people, since they are in the midst of death, dream of life, that since they are in the midst of all misery, dream of bliss, they are safest in the utmost dangers. Therefore, we are rightly taught to pray that our days be numbered, not so that we may know the time set for us, but so that we may take note of how miserable and short our lives are, because of death and the eternal wrath of God that may befall us at any moment. One can sometimes find troubled people who have this feeling exceedingly strongly, without praying for it; but

The majority has not, since almost all live in such a way that they consider the one moment they live as an immeasurable time (*saeculum*). For them this prayer is very necessary, which Moses prescribes here. But listen to what he adds:

That we may become wise. 1)

In the verbum XXX, *incedemus*], is a common way of speaking, for it is used for what we say: to carry out things, to have to do in business, to manage something, as if he wanted to say: This is such a life that one must not stand still nor be idle, but walk along, that is, have something to do, whether in housekeeping or in worldly government. Therefore give us grace to do this wisely, that is, in humility and in your fear, that we may remember that we are under your wrath because of our sin, and not be found under the heels of men who do not rightly know or care for either their life or their death, but only feed the belly, seeking honors and power. These walk in the highest contempt against God, who is angry with them, and care neither for grace nor wrath; they therefore live in the utmost foolishness and stupor. Therefore, keep us in this wisdom, that is, in your fear. For the beginning of wisdom, or rather the highest wisdom, is the fear of the Lord [Sir. 1:16], to know the wrath of God, and to live and do all things humbly.

In this way, the Scripture praises the fear of God when people live in such a way that they fear the wrath of God at every hour and think that they deserve death. For this is the first piece of blessedness, when one sees no blessedness because of sin. This is the highest wisdom, to walk in the knowledge of the wrath of God. For in this way we are prepared, as the earth is prepared by the plow, to receive the divine seed, the fruit of which is eternal life. Pharaoh, Sanherib and others lack this

1) In Latin: *inesttarnus eorUs sapienti*, "and we shall walk with wise hearts," to which the interpretation refers.

Wisdom, therefore, they perish before they realize that they perish, for they are blinded by their power and forces. On the other hand, Hezekiah, who was besieged in Jerusalem, Moses and the Jews at the Red Sea find a certain and glorious salvation. Therefore, we should hold on to this: it is not condemnable to feel the wrath of God, but it is the beginning of blessedness, which cannot be obtained without constant prayer. For it is a special gift of God, which reason neither understands nor recognizes, otherwise Moses would not ask so earnestly for this wisdom to be given.

V. 13. Lord, return to us and be merciful to your servants.

This is the main part of the prayer that is offered. He sees that there are few who live in the fear of God, who count their days and act wisely; for these few, whom he calls servants of God, he prays that God will comfort them. But as he spoke above [v. 7], when he gives the whole human race to death (occidit), of death and the eternal wrath of God, so also here he does not speak of any comfort of the flesh in this world, but of eternal life. Not only does he ask for this, but at the same time he promises it to those who have this first grace, that they may recognize the wrath of God and feel the divine judgment. This request therefore includes the prophecy of the future Christ, since eternal blessedness could only be brought about through Christ. But this secret of blessedness had to be hidden for the sake of the Epicureans and other safe people until the future of Christ, in whom the treasures of God's mercy have been revealed.

The meaning is therefore easy: You have brought us low with sorrow, you have given this first wisdom, that we may know wrath; now, dear God, you have killed enough, brought us low enough, humbled us enough: now turn at last, and be gracious to us, show us also how kind and merciful you are, that we may have something with which to comfort our hearts in this terror. For he speaks of the turning away of all wrath and

Death, not of the temporal, but of the eternal. For what else should he ask in place of these terrors? What consolation would there be in it, if we were to pass a day or two in happiness? That is why he speaks of an everlasting life and blessedness. If others will not count their days, be merciful to your servants who count them continually and fear you, who walk with a wise heart and consider your wrath. For you are the God who will restore to life those who have been killed 2c.

Of course, I have also reminded of this opinion above. For he prays to such a God, who is a king outside of this bodily life of ours, therefore he asks absolutely for the attainment of eternal life. For if there were no other life apart from this bodily life, what need would we have of God? We have dominion over all other creatures, over the fish, the birds and the beasts of the field; that would be enough for this bodily life, if the worldly regiment and the household were ordered. But Moses shows that after this life there is another life, since in this distress he prays to God, who is outside the world and invisible. It follows that His grace and the life we desire from Him is invisible and belongs to another life, as far as we are concerned, but does not concern the oxen, as Paul says in 1 Cor. 9:9: "He does not care for the oxen."

That he now teaches in this way that one should expect eternal bliss through GOD secretly indicates that GOD must become man. If the Jews have not all understood this, what is that to us? Not even today all of them know our religion or care about it. Therefore, just as there are many among us who sing this Psalm and yet do not understand it, so under the law only the spiritually minded people saw these darkly indicated mysteries and recognized that God, whom they worshipped in the tabernacle and whom they believed to dwell in the mercy seat, should become man in his own time and bring this blessedness to mankind, against the wrath of God and eternal death. The others, like swine, were only interested in their well-being.

We are not concerned with lust and temporal concerns, as many today misuse the Gospel, as if everything depended on temporal things. But it is fitting for us to expect another life and another kingdom, which Moses here refers to as an eternal kingdom; and no doubt, when he wrote this verse, he was looking at the mystery of our blessedness, and had a foretaste of eternal life, since he teaches those who are terrified by their sins to pray in this way and to hope for blessedness.

V. 14. Fill us early with your grace, and we will boast and rejoice all our lives.

By "grace" he actually understands the grace that belongs to the thing he is talking about, that is, not any particular grace, but the quite general one that serves this whole disease about which he has complained so far. But now he has confessed and complained, not about any particular misfortune or disease, such as the exile in Egypt or Babylon, but about the general misery of the whole human race, about sin and the wrath of God, under which the whole world lies oppressed. Therefore, since he now asks for mercy, it follows with inevitable consequence that he asks for such mercy, which is a remedy for this general and common evil. For what or why else should he ask for a small and small benefit for a few years against an infinite misery? The Scriptures often use the word "grace" for special and bodily benefits, but here the text and the context force us to take "grace" in a general way, from the general blessedness against the general ruin of sin and death, so that the opinion is: Give an overflowing grace, not a special one, by which either the kingdom or health is preserved; we ask for a fullness and an abundance of your grace. For in this calamity, which afflicts the whole human race, not a special and (that I say so) dripping grace is enough for us, but as it were a flood and an abundance.

a sea that satisfies us; then we will rejoice and be glad. For grace alone, which frees us from sin and assures us of certain eternal bliss, produces constant and true joy, gratitude and thanksgiving.

V. 15. Now please us again, after you have afflicted us so long, after we have suffered such lukewarm misfortunes.

From the foregoing it is known of what humiliation or plagues he speaks. For he said [v. 7]: You make man nothing, [v. 9] our days pass away by your wrath and fury. There he speaks of the evils which we have seen, all the time we have been living, even which the whole human race has suffered and is suffering from the beginning of the world to the end. For this evil, he says, I ask you now, with which you humiliated us immediately from our birth, and for the years in which we have seen how we have all been ruined because of sin. He therefore shows that he asks for an eternal remedy against the evils that are born with us and always cling to us, namely against original sin and its punishments. Against these evils, he says, we pray, and ask for an eternal forgiveness of sins, - not for a legal one, - against the perpetual evil. Then we also pray for deliverance from punishment, that we may be not only righteous, but also joyful and cheerful, that humiliation and sin may be taken away through the forgiveness of sins, and also that the seeing of misfortune (*visio malorum*, 1) as he says, may cease through the joy and blessedness which is the deliverance from punishment.

Furthermore, it is not hidden that the prophet asks with these general words for the future of Christ into the flesh. For this redemption could not be brought about in any other way than through the only begotten seed. For this mystery had to be indicated in such obscure words, so that those who would be holy might know in what way they would be saved.

1) In Latin the end of the verse is: *seeunāuru anllos, ^uibus viāiauas atūietionem.*

should be made blessed. And this is the light of the Holy Spirit, which the necessary context of the text proves, that Moses asks for a remedy against the general anger against sin. Since this was only with the Messiah, this request includes Christ. The saints recognized this by the help of the Holy Spirit, but the rest of the rough and carnal crowd did not see it, especially since the Scriptures often use the same words about bodily and special salvation. Therefore, those who do not pay attention to the context will never recognize that Christ is asked here to come into the flesh and free the world from sins and death. For this is that fullness and satisfaction of mercy which the 130th Psalm, v. 7, calls "much redemption." For by this ransom, which is paid for sins, innumerable wagers could be redeemed.

V. 16. Show your servants your works, and your glory to their children.

This belongs to the same prayer that was started above. The word is well known; it is usually translated by "work," but in such a way that one must understand a work of recompense or a reward, as Isa. 40, 10.: "His reward is with him," where ² is written, and in the 109th Psalm, v. 20: "So be it unto them" in the Vulgate: Hoc opus eorum, similarly in Job [Cap. 27, 13.]: "This is the reward (opus) of an ungodly man", that is, this is the reward (praemium), this is their inheritance or retribution. In this way, also here, the work of God is understood from the reward or reward which God pays to those who, trusting in His mercy, have endured the terrors of death and other perils of which Moses said, as if to say: We are afflicted with sins and oppressed by death, we have been the most shameful slaves of devils; therefore, give us your work against that work of Satan. For the pronoun "thy" emphatically includes the antithesis. Therefore, the manner of speaking and the meaning agree with what John says in his first epistle [Cap. 3, 8.]: "Christ has come to destroy the works of the devils.

of the devil destroy." The work of the devil is that he has trodden under the feet of lins, and through sin has cast us out of life into death, as the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 2, 14.] calls the devil the author of death. Against this work of the devil Christ came with his work and took away the power of death and brought life to the light. For these are in truth divine works, which justify, quicken and save.

It is true that God also claims the work of killing for Himself, as we have heard above in the prayer of Moses, and the Scripture clearly says full of God that He kills and makes alive. But Isaiah makes a distinction here and says that some works are works of God, but some are foreign, and some are his own. His own works are the works of mercy, that He forgives sins, declares those who believe in Christ righteous and makes them blessed. Foreign works are that he judges, condemns, punishes the impenitent and unbelievers. God must take these and call them his work, because of our hope, so that we, humbled, may recognize him as our Lord and obey his will. Then he must also do this for the sake of the cause we have indicated above, namely, so that we do not invent for ourselves, according to the example of the Manichaeans, that there are several gods, or one author (principium) of good and one author of evil. God wants us to see to it that the evil that is inflicted upon us is inflicted upon us by His permission. For if he did not permit it, the devil could never have harmed Job in this way. But he allows it for his own sake, so that we, humbled, may throw ourselves on his mercy. Thus the word XXX denotes, as it were, a retribution, so that the opinion is: "Show your works," that is, make us alive who are humbled by death, make us righteous who are afflicted by sin, and thus show us your real work, life and righteousness 2c.

But, you will say, he asked for the same above, wishing to be satiated with mercy. It is true, but this prayer is directed to ask that this work of mercy be shown to be felt. For it is not enough that one

have a gift, unless our eyes are also opened to see the gift, as Paul says in 1 Cor. 2:12: "The Spirit has revealed it to us, so that we may know what has been given to us by God." All men have life, but how many are those who believe that it is God's gift, who thank God for it, and ask that it be given to them? The purpose of this verse, then, is that the sensation of this benefit may permeate the hearts, so that they may not doubt the forgiveness of sins, that the work of God or grace may be demonstrated in such a way that the hearts may be certain of their salvation, that they may see their life, blessedness and righteousness, as David asks in the 51st Psalm, v. 12, that he may be strengthened by a certain spirit. But it is beautiful that he calls this work of GOD the glory of GOD, since he adds: "And your glory to their children." About in the same manner connects this the 19th Psalm, v. 2. "The heavens tell the glory of GOD, and the firmament proclaims the work of his hands"; but in this place [Ps. 90, 16.] XXX, which denotes a glorious and very beautiful ornament or delicious (splendid) garments, is like Ps. 104, 1. "Thou art beautifully and splendidly adorned." The Scripture, however, uses this way of speaking and says that God is adorned with splendid clothing, in order to indicate that God appears in the hearts of men and is revealed through His glorious and sublime works, in which He lets Himself be seen, as it were, clothed with splendid clothing.

But it is these works that Christ is made unto us of GOD for our righteousness, wisdom, holiness, salvation, light, joy and all good things, that he is our way, truth and life. When GOtt appears to us in these works of life, blessedness and righteousness, then He appears to us in truth in His glory. But before He so appears, then He is in truth, as Moses says, under the dark waters. That is why despondent consciences are afraid of him, not seeing the works of his glory, imagining him to be the devil and not being able to picture him in a lovable form or clothing. They arm him with swords and lightning, so that indeed there is nothing more terrifying or abominable in heaven or on earth.

as the wrathful God. As such he appeared on the mountain Sinai, as such Moses also described him above. Here, however, he asks that another form be shown to us, which we can look upon with pleasure and about which we can rejoice. This is how God is in truth when we look at Him in the person of Christ. For in Him is the highest mercy, life, blessedness, salvation. In him GOtt is gloriously seen, that is, adorned with his glorious and lovely works. In this way, he says, show yourself to us miserable and damned sinners.

This is the first part of the petition by which he asks for forgiveness of sins and righteousness and eternal life. He asks for these things in such a way that we are certain and our heart can in no way doubt them. Since this only happens in Christ, this request actually includes the future of Christ in the flesh. What now follows, and with which he concludes the prayer, actually belongs to our works.

V. 17. And the LORD our God be kind to us, and promote the work of our hands with us; yea, the work of our hands will he promote.

In the word XXX ["kind"] there is, as it were, a flood of grace. Until now, he says, O Lord, we have asked for your work. There we do nothing, but are only spectators and recipients of your gifts, we behave only suffering. For then you show yourself to us and make us blessed only through your work, which you do by freeing us from the disease that the devil in Adam inflicted on the whole human race, namely sin and eternal death. After this thy work we also come with our work, when we are thus justified, and live holy in obedience to thy word, and this is well pleasing and acceptable unto thee; but yet this also is of thy grace, and proceedeth out of thy work, which thou didst first. Therefore let the Lord our God be kind to us, that we may please him, having been reconciled to him through the death of his Son. For he desires that the LORD be joyful and kind to those to whom he has given his life.

he has shown his works, so that we may not fear his face, but may firmly believe that we and ours are pleasing to him. He asks this because, even though we are saved from death, the remnants of sin remain in the saints, and many other troubles follow, as well as many sufferings and temptations within us and outside of us. Therefore, if God wanted to look at everything according to severity, God would be angry at any moment.

This is because God does not want to be angry with what remains of sin in us because of the flesh; therefore, He does not want to take away life and the forgiveness of sins from us; but rather that God remain kind and loving toward us, and in turn we should remain kind and loving toward God. For this is to show God in His glory (gloriosum), not as He is in Himself, but that He is kind, glorious, and joyful toward us, and then it is said that God is joyful over us if we consider that God is not angry with us, but is a friend to us and kind toward us. But this is a very necessary request; because our flesh is weak, our heart fearful, and our conscience exceedingly tender, therefore we are terrified at the slightest occasion. Then, because sins and the punishments of sins are daily, there is sufficient cause for sadness and weakness of faith. Now when our hearts become sorrowful, it is said that God Himself becomes sorrowful, who died for this reason, so that we might be righteous, holy and joyful. Therefore this petition belongs here, that we say: O Lord, you have given us your Son; keep this gift for us. Often we fall by a word, often by a work, often still by thoughts; this disturbs this joy. Therefore, even if we sin or are careless and ungrateful, you remain our God in such a way that you may be kind and loving, that is, that we may be preserved in the joy and peace of the Holy Spirit.

The other part of this verse repeats twice that the work of our hands may be furthered, perhaps for the sake of showing the difference between the spiritual and the spiritual.

The first is to indicate the kingdom of the flesh, for according to this our works are also distinguished. For some we do in the church and others in the home, either in the household or in the temporal government. In the church we do what concerns the soul and the spiritual life; in the home and in the household and in the temporal government, what belongs to the bodily life. Therefore, in the first part, he seems to say, "Direct the work of our hands" to indicate the work in which we are directed by God, and yet also do something with teaching, comforting, punishing, judging, baptizing, communicating, etc., which are works to govern the church and to guide the people in spiritual things. But we see how highly this work is needed, lest mobs break in, perverting the sacraments and their use, falsifying the word 2c. Here it is truly necessary that God governs and directs this work in us, since we also do something and do not merely suffer, as in the first work of God. In this sense, I take it that he says: "Promote the work of our hands among us," as if he wanted to say: After we have been justified, grant that the doctrine may remain pure, lest in the time of the Law the Law of Moses be overturned by hypocrites, lest today the Gospel be falsified, thus grieving God and the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

The verbum means to make firm, as Peter speaks, 1 Petr. 5, 10.: "God will make you fully ready and strengthen you." Thus David calls the spirit [Ps. 51, 12] a certain, firm spirit, which does not doubt at all and accepts the word with great courage, so that, as Peter says [1 Ep. 4, 11], "If anyone speaks that he speaks it as the word of God, if anyone has a ministry," 2c, that there be no doubt of the doctrine, and that hearts be not uncertain of the gracious will of God toward them; that when any man ask forgiveness of sins, and hear the promise of Christ, he doubt not that his sins are truly forgiven him, as the word saith, and that he think it is not the work of man only, but of God. In this way, what is done in the church must be certain, not as if someone brushes the air [Cor. 9, 26],

and this is the actual meaning of this word that he uses here; we translate it generally by "promote" ([Ps. 7, 10.] confirmare - to fortify). And this request is truly necessary, because this work of God, which is administered through our service, is challenged by the devil on the outside and by our hearts on the inside. Therefore, it is difficult to hold on to this confidence that God is kind to us and not to doubt the work of God at all. But he who doubts is neither fit to teach nor to learn, but is unsteady in his ways, and is torn hither and thither. Therefore, Moses asks, not without cause, for the works of our hands to be promoted or strengthened, so that there may be certainty both in those who teach and in those who receive, so that there may remain in the church the firm foundation against which the gates of hell are powerless, and so that all may be certain about the word and the work of God.

That he now repeats: "Yes, He wants to promote the work of our hands", I take from the work in the worldly government and in the household, that God wants to give common peace, so that disruption does not occur, as Paul [1 Tim. 2, 1. f.] exhorts that one should pray for the kings, so that we may lead a calm and quiet life. Peace is necessary, not only for the nourishment of the body, but also for the education of the youth and the teaching of the churches. And it is mainly for this reason that the secular authorities are appointed, so that peace may be maintained through their efforts, works and help, lest either education be prevented by a relaxation of discipline, or the congregations may not be properly instructed through rebellion and war, as happens in war. For there is neither faith nor godliness in the men who have chosen warfare, 2) and the spirits are silent under arms.

1) Instead of *ürinawentum*, *kunclamentani* should be read, 2 Tim. 2, 19.

2) Nulln. 6(168 pietÄShno viri8 <jUL6 castrg, 86Huuntur.

In short, the whole lovely order (*harmonia*) of the world regiment is dissolved by the weapons. Therefore, one must ask with Moses for peace, that God may guide the works of our hands, which are not above us, but in our hands. For that which belongs to the worldly regime and the household is subject to reason, according to the saying [Gen. 1:28]: "Rule over the fish of the sea" 2c.

So Moses prays for the things that are necessary in this life: first, for forgiveness of sins and eternal life; then, because we are not idle in this life, but the soul must be strengthened by God's word until death, but the body must be nourished in peace, he prays that godliness may be taught rightly and peace may be maintained. If we have this, namely eternal life in certain hope, then pure teaching of the word (*ministerium*) in the church, and finally a quiet life or peace, then we have everything, and live in peace of body and soul, increasing daily in faith until we fly out to heaven. Now this is not merely a request, but also a promise, as we have said elsewhere of the prayers which the Holy Spirit has prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.

Now you have this Psalm, which I have interpreted according to the ability that the Lord has given me. After this, if the Lord will give us longer life, we will interpret the first book of Moses, so that we may finally die blessed in God's word and work. God and our Savior, Christ Jesus, grant this. Amen.

3) I will, God willing, see to it that this Psalm can be read by the godly people who do not know the Latin language in their native tongue. For it contains a useful and necessary teaching, and it is very important that it be known.

3) This last paragraph is missing in the two old "Uebersetzer".

23. interpretation of the 101st Psalm. *)

Anno 1534.

The 101st Psalm. 1534.

[1. A Psalm of David.]

Bon grace and justice will I sing, and praise thee, O Lord.

2. I act carefully and honestly with those who belong to me and walk faithfully in my house.

3. I do not take an evil thing, I hate the transgressor and do not let him stay with me.

4. a wicked heart must depart from me; I will not suffer the wicked.

(5) I will destroy him who slandered his neighbor in secret; I do not like him who is proud and has great courage.

6. mine eyes look for the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; and I delight to have godly servants.

7 I will not keep false people in my house; liars do not prosper with me.

8. early will I destroy all the wicked of the land, and cut off all the transgressors from the city of the LORD.

Preface.

This psalm is the one that praises and thanks God for the worldly class, as the 127th and 128th and many others do; and has always been sung among other psalms in the church by the spiritual lords, who alone wanted to be the holy, praised people of God and the church, but neither knew nor understood anything about how they praised the class so highly in such psalms with their mouths, which they daily held in disgrace and almost trampled underfoot. And if they had understood such psalms, I think they would have left them outside and never sung them again, because it is an unrighteous thing for such holy people to sing and praise the worldly state in public in church, which is not a good thing.

1) Erlanger: the churches.

They were contemptuous of their rank only because they would have liked to see themselves and only the lords on earth, and that all other lords would have become monks. And truly, they have almost reached or exceeded the halfway mark, so that worldly lords have forgotten their office, shunned the church and masses, and the clergy have even abandoned their priesthood, engaged in hunting, warfare and entirely worldly activities. But God made this psalm, and others like it, sing through their mouths, just as He spoke to Balaam through the donkey, even though the foolish prophet could not understand it [Deut. 22:28].

(2) But much more is this psalm against the sedevacantists, who pretend to great holiness by condemning households, marriages, and other things.

In this interpretation Luther gives an excellent, thorough instruction to those who are in the highest position in the secular government. Köstlin, after he has communicated the content of this writing in a detailed manner, makes the following accurate judgment about it (Köstlin, M. Luther [3rd ed.], Vol. II, p. 305): "Among the classical writings of the German man Luther, this writing deserves one of the first places, - among those which refer to the subject matter at hand, the first. The first edition appeared under the title: "Der 61. Psalm, Durch v. Mar. Luth. Ausgelegt. Wittenberg. Al. v. XXXIII." At the end: "Gedruckt zu Wittenberg, durch Hans Luft. M. D. XXXV." In the collective editions: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. III, p. 453; in the Jena (1568), vol. VI, p. 135; in the Altenburg, vol. VI, p. 181; in the Leipzig, vol. VI, p. 356 and in the Erlangen, vol. 39, p. 265. We give the text according to the Erlangen edition, which brings the original print, comparing the Wittenberg and the Jena.

The high and low estate of the earth. For he teaches and comforts such people who are in the same ranks and must be, so that they do not run away and leave everything behind. And especially he teaches the high estates, where one must keep court and court servants. Therefore David, who was a king and had to keep court servants, sets himself as an example,

as a pious king or prince should look after his servants. And although I myself am inexperienced at court and know little of the treachery and cunning that reigns there, nevertheless, as much as I have heard and learned from others, I will add to it as best I can, and also make use of the histories, so that I may hit and give the words of the psalm all the more clearly.

[Interpretation of the 101st Psalm.] *)

V. 1. I will sing of grace and justice, and praise you, O Lord.

3. soon in the beginning he gives such a teaching to the kings and princes that they should praise and thank God where they have good order and pious servants at home or at court; from this they should learn and know that it is a special gift of God and not their own wisdom or ability.

4 For it is so in the world, that no man is so rude or so unskilful, that, when he is in command, he thinks to do well, and does not like anything that others do in command; as that servant in the comedy of Terentii desires, saying, Oh, I should have been a king! And Absalom said behind David his father unto the men of Israel, Thou hast a good cause, but there is none appointed of the king to question thee. Oh that I had the rule of the land, and that all things should come before me, how well would I do justice 2c. 2 Sam. 15, 3. 4.

(5) These are the masters of cleverness, who can bridle the horse (with great wisdom) in the butt, and can do nothing more than judge and master other people; and when they get hold of it, everything goes to ruin with them, just as it is said: He who is entitled to the game can do it best. For they think that when they get the ball in their hands, they will hit twelve skittles, since there are only nine on the board 1) until they learn that there is also a path next to the corpse.

1) Compare Walch, St. Louiser Ausg. vol. XXII, 665, note 3.

6.. Such people do not praise and thank God, nor do they think that it is God's gift, or that they should ask and call upon God for it, but they are presumptuous, and think that their reason and wisdom are so certain that they cannot lack it, and they want to have the honor and glory of being able to rule in front of others, and to do everything well; just as if the good man (who is called our Lord God) should sit idle, and not be present where one wants to do something good. So then he does, and looks through his fingers, and lets the children of men measure and make the tower of Babylon; then he comes in three times, and scatters them, and destroys everything, so that no one understands what the other says [Gen. 11:1 ff.] And it serves them right, because they conclude that God is like their counsel, and want to be smart enough themselves, and have the honor that is due to God alone.

(7) I have often, when I was still in the monastery, seen and heard wise and sensible people advising, who presented it so powerfully, surely and beautifully, that I thought it was impossible that it could be missing. Well," I said, "it has hands and feet, it is alive; and I certainly thought it was, as if it had already happened and was there before my eyes. But when they attacked it and wanted to bring it to work, it went back so shamefully, and the beautiful, living advice became much more vain than a dream or a switch is, and I had to say: "Well, if that was a dream, then the devil relies on pretty, beautiful advice. How vain is all appearance and glitter where God is not involved.

*) Instead of this heading, which we have placed, the original has: "The first verse. In each of the following verses, the number of the verse is set there in the same way as a heading, which we have not imitated.

After that I learned the saying of Solomon, Proverbs 8:14: "Both counsel and action are mine"; and St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 3:7: "He who plants is nothing, and he who waters is nothing; but it is God who gives prosperity. But the children of men do not believe it until they know it; but, if they can advise, they think that the thing must come to pass. How can it fail, they say, it is as certain as that seven and three make ten. And it is true, mathematically, that according to number and reckoning seven and three make even ten, and if they fail not, the council is made; but physically, according to the deed or in the work, it is so, that God can melt the seven pieces into one piece, and make seven into one; again, the three divide into thirty; so then it is no longer the certain ten in deed, which were there before in the council.

9 So, I think, it will also happen at court; for I have not been at court, nor do I desire to be, God continue to protect me; but by the examples it is well to remember. As, the pope Clement and the king of France had the emperor before Pavia quite certainly, and could not miss them; they also keep it counted that seven and three had to make ten. But what kind of deed followed such advice, they both experienced. How the wise Venetians made a mistake with their certain advice against Emperor Maximilian! How often have the papists lost so many fine, certain counsels against the Lutherans during these twelve years! All histories are full of such examples, and whoever is at court should of course learn enough of such examples daily from all kings and princes.

(10) For the king or prince sits wise and prudent for himself, and has grasped the matter by all five corners; to this then comes a jurist ¹⁾ or lawyer with his book, and finds the law often written in it, certain and clear, that [it] cannot fail; after that, a great man, for whom the head is much too small for great minuteness and wisdom, finds it so firmly founded and deeply rooted in natural law that [it] cannot be overthrown by all the world; at last they ring together,

and bombs the big bell, that is, a bishop, prelate, theologian, grown by himself or otherwise made, who brings God's word and the holy scripture. Here the devil himself must give way, and let the matter be right, fair, good, and also divine. There sit the four pillars of the kingdom or principality, which could also carry the heavens, if God would command their wisdom to do so.

(11) Here is none of them that sighed up to heaven, and sought counsel and action of God. For they are either such godless people that their conscience does not let them pray or call, or they are so sure and certain of their wisdom and things that they disdainfully forget it, as if they needed nothing; or else they are so accustomed to counseling that they are stubborn in their unbelief. So our Lord God must sit idle above, and may not come into the council of such wise men, and meanwhile chats with his angel Gabriel, and says: "Dear, what are the wise men doing in the council chamber, that they do not take us into their council as well? They should want to build the tower of Babylon once again. Dear Gabriel, go and take Isaiam with you, and read them a secret lesson at the window, and say [Isa. 6, 10.]: "With seeing eyes you shall see nothing, with hearing ears you shall hear nothing, with understanding hearts you shall understand nothing." [Is. 8, 10: "Decide on a council and nothing will come of it; talk with each other and nothing will come of it"; for [Proverbs 8, 14] "both council and action are mine". Et factum est ita, so it shall be.

(12) Here you might say, "Should we not do what is right, what reason teaches, what God means? What is the purpose of rights? What is reason good for? What do you theologians teach? Should it all be nothing? Answer: We are not condemning or rejecting law, good reason and holy scripture here, but rather the unfortunate addition and defilement of our presumption, that we do not approach such counsel and law with the fear of God and humble, earnest prayer, just as if it were enough for someone to have a right or a good thing, and to want or to bring the counsel to fruition quickly, as if of his own ability.

1) Jurgist - master of rage.

This means to despise God and to want to be the man who can do it and take honor, and it is against the first commandment. Therefore such an addition makes the greatest injustice out of the best right, the greatest folly out of the most beautiful reason, and the greatest error out of the holy Scriptures. For where the first commandment is not, nor does it shine, all the others do not shine rightly, and there is all false reason.

13. Therefore it is said: It is not enough that you have the most beautiful right and the best cause, and that your counsel is most certain; Indeed, the more beautiful your right and the better your cause, the less you should be presumptuous and insist on it, but the more you should fear God, who delights to desecrate the most beautiful right and to overthrow the best things, because of presumption, because you rely on it and insist on it, by which you spoil everything, and provoke and anger God against you; for He is hostile to presumption and presumption, as it takes away His honor and strives against the first commandment. Therefore he also resists with all force, as St. Peter says [1 Ep. 5, 5.], those who hope. The children of Israel (Judges 20:22 ff.) had the very best right against the Benjamites, which is scarcely heard of, nor were they twice so severely beaten by the unrighteous and small band, theirs a much larger band, that they lost forty thousand men in both battles, until the third time they learned to put away presumption and call upon God for counsel and action, then they won again and kept the right.

14 But it is and remains the way in royal and princely courts, as well as in the lower classes, that everything is done out of presumption, if it is done in the best way, and they console themselves that they are well justified; but some are much worse off that they have great goods and power; God is always forgotten, therefore it is and will be according to that. But still, because our Lord God's small group, the church, prays for the kings and lords, they enjoy such prayers as the unworthy; otherwise it should happen quite horribly. For the children of Israel also had to pray for their enemy, the king of Babylon, that [it] might go well with him and his kingdom, until so long that

His hour came, when he had plagued and subdued his intercessors too much, so that he deserved the end of his kingdom. So now we also pray for our tyrants, until they also deserve it by murdering and persecuting us, and when their hour comes, they will perish without all mercy. Amen.

(15) Let this be the first lesson and admonition from this Psalm, that a prince or lord learn and know that a pious household, faithful servants and good government are God's gift, and a great gift, and his highest treasure, where he has one, two, three faithful men at court, or in offices (although this is much), and thank God for it, with a request that He preserve and improve such treasure for him. For the world is too wicked, false and unfaithful, as David says (Ps. 116:11): "All men are false"; especially at court, where everyone, or the greater part, 1) seeks not to increase like the prince, but to warm himself and grow fat; let it be to the prince as God wills.

(16) Thus a prince cannot look into the heart of anyone, and so his rule must remain in darkness, because he must rule and manage with and through such people whom he does not know, nor does he know how they are minded, and he walks even as a chariot that drives in the night, and must go to darkness, 2) often not knowing whither, and when he thinks he is going there, he has gone astray, sometimes overturns, breaks rope, wheel, and all. For Christ says [John 12:35], "He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." But Christ's kingdom is not like this; he knows all hearts, and whoever wants to be unfaithful to him deceives himself and does no harm to his Lord, but the Lord can turn his servant's wickedness to his benefit and best; this cannot be in the worldly regime, where hearts are hidden.

(17) But that which the psalm calls "grace and justice" is not said of God's grace and justice, but of the grace and justice which a prince exercises toward his servants and subjects. For it is also said at court that a prince or lord is gracious, that he shows great mercy to him or to his servants.

1) Thus the Wittenbergers. Erlanger: toin large part.

2) "Gedunk", that is, discretion, good discretion.

2c., and justice is almost as much as punishment; as is the way of the court: I will let the right go; item: Do you want mercy, or right? For when the princes offer justice, it is almost at the point where the shirt hangs. So here David also speaks politely or princely of mercy and justice, that is, of benevolence toward the pious and punishment toward the wicked. A prince and lord must need both of these things. For where there is vain mercy, and the prince lets himself be milked and trumped on the mouth, neither punishes nor is angry, then not only the court, but also the country becomes full of bad boys, and all discipline and honor perish. Again, where there is vain or too much anger or punishment, there is tyranny, and the pious cannot catch their breath from daily fear and anxiety.

(18) For so say the heathen, that is, daily experience: *Summum jus, summa injuria*, strict justice is the greatest injustice. Just as it may be said of grace: Vain grace is the greatest disgrace. Just as a father can do no greater unpaternal deed to his child than to spare the child the rods and leave him to his will; for with such foolish love he finally sends a son to the executioner, who must then drag him to the gallows with the rope.

19 Measurements are good in all things; there belongs art, yes, God's grace, that one may hit it. But in such a case, because the means are not good to hit the core, then this is shot to the next purpose, that grace has the process before the right. As also here David calls the grace before, and after it the right. For where it is ever not to be met, it is better and safer to be lacking on this side than on that; that is, it is better to have too much mercy than too much punishment. For too much mercy can be recovered and less, but punishment cannot be recovered, especially where life and limb are **concerned**.

(20) Nor can all evil on earth be punished, especially the secret evil wiles; as it is said, He that would avenge all evil would never have to take a sword. And the pagans say: 1) Si quoties etc., if

1) In the Wittenberg and in the Jena in the margin: "Ovidius".

God so often should strike with thunder and lightning, so often people sin, he would not have thunder nor lightning enough in a short time. [It is enough to punish the public and conscious misdeeds. If God wants to punish the secret evil deeds, he will reveal it; nothing remains unpunished, be it secret or obvious; we see daily that the secret evil doers, as thieves, murderers 2c., come into the hands of the executioner in the end, by God's judgment and punishment, without which he himself punishes with water, fire, pestilence 2c. And if a prince or lord seriously makes it clear that he does not want to suffer any public misdeeds, and diligently strives for them and sees to it, he easily prevents many evil deeds, even though he must suffer the secret deeds until God Himself punishes them or gives them into His hands to be punished.

21 It can also happen that one cannot punish a public wickedness, especially so hastily; as one reads of David, 2 Sam. 3:27, when he did not punish his cousin Joab, who was his captain, all his life, even though he had committed two evil deeds (as David himself complains, and also curses him), namely, Abnet and Amasa, both captains of the army, and more pious than he, murdered him treacherously, but let him remain in his office and honor, but ordered his son Solomon to punish him afterwards [1 Kings 2:28-34]. Item: Jacob did not punish his son Reuben either, until he wanted to die, he cursed him, and turned away from him the glory of the first birth, namely, the kingdom and priesthood [Gen. 49, 3. ff.]. For such a case may arise that one cannot punish a wicked man so soon without great harm and danger to others; yet all punishment should finally be directed to the terror and correction of others (as St. Peter and Paul teach) and to the peace and safety of the pious, Rom. 13, 4. 1 Petr. 2, 14.

(22) But when such journeys and damages exist, this cannot be told nor grasped; God must himself give it to the prince or lord, that he may consider, according to his highest ability, where, when and to which knave he should or must lend a bill. For if David had so promptly

If Jacob had punished his son Reuben so quickly because he was a pilgrim and among his enemies, he would have caused a great calamity against himself. And if Jacob had punished his son Reuben so quickly because he was a pilgrim and among his enemies, he would have caused a great calamity against himself. For he was also almost angry that his two sons, Levi and Simeon, had struck Shechem, and in the end he cursed them both. So I heard in Welsch land to Sems of emperor Friedrich 1) say: We have learned from your emperor many sayings, especially this: Qui nescit dissimulare, nescit imperare, he who cannot overlook or overhear cannot rule; for they would have liked to see him go through with his head and smell their damage.

23. summa, that we do the matter differently: God has two kinds of people on earth, in all kinds of ranks; some have a special star before God, whom He Himself teaches and raises up as He wants them to be; these also have a good wind on earth, and, as it is called. Happiness and victory. What they have begun will continue, and if all the world should strive against it, it must go forth unhindered. For God, who puts it into their hearts and drives their minds and courage, also puts it into their hands, so that it must come to pass and be accomplished, as Samson, David, Jehoiada and the like. And not only does he sometimes give such people among his people, but also among the wicked and the heathen; and not only in princes, but also in citizens, farmers and craftsmen. As, in Persia the king Cyrum; in Greece the prince Themistoclem and Alexandrum Magnum; with the Romans Angustum, Vespasianum 2c., item, in Syria he gave all salvation and happiness through the one man Naeman, 2 Kings 5, 1. Such people I do not call drawn or made, but created, and by God driven princes or lords.

24. These are such skilled people that they do not need much teaching or writing about what to do and how to do it, and before they are taught what to do, they have done it. 2) Without needing God's word to teach them, they attribute their good fortune and great deeds to God, and give Him the glory from whom they got it, and do not praise or glorify themselves; which they do not do without God's word, nor do they know how to do, therefore they rarely come to a good end, as all histories testify. For example, the female warrior Hannibal did not learn from anyone how to fight the Romans and defeat them so horribly, because he had the right master and scripture in his heart, and did everything before he could be taught; he also went against all other wise men's advice and teaching.

(25) And I must tell here as an example what Cicero writes about it, how Hannibal, when he had fled to the great Antiocho for help against the Romans, and was held magnificently, there was a famous philosopher, Phormio, who was demanded by Antiocho that Hannibal should hear him. And Phormio demonstrated his art, preached several hours about wars, about captains, how they should be skillful, and what was due to a good warrior 2c. When all the others were highly delighted and admired such a sermon, Antiochus asked Hannibal how he liked it. [Hannibal said: I have seen many old fools in my days, but none so great as this Phormion. Cicero praised such an answer and said: "It was truly right: Hannibal had fought and defeated the Romans so long and often, forcing all the world, and Phormio wanted to teach him, who himself had never seen an army or a defense in his lifetime.

Here the student is quite unequal to such a master, and if Phormio had known and experienced at best what war is and how one should fight, and was called a master of the art, he should still not take Hannibal as a student before him, but pull off his little beret before him and speak: Dear doctor in warfare.

2) Only the Wittenberger has interpungited correctly here, and put a punctum. The meaning is: Only this is necessary for them, that they are instructed by God's word 2c.

1) In Luther's "Notes on the 5th Book of Moses", Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. III, t381 This saying is attributed to Emperor Frederick the Third, who is mentioned once more in this writing, not to Rothbart, as Walch says in the register (Vol. XXIV, 278d).

For Hannibal was not created to be a pupil in the art of war, but others were to learn from him and be his pupils, as he was created by God Himself to be a master in this art, and not educated or made by other men; otherwise it goes as they say: Egg teaches the chicken, and the sow masters God, and Phormio equips Hannibal. Although the world is always full of such Phormions in all classes, and they are called Master Klügel, the shameful, harmful man, who can do everything better, and yet he is not the man. And if Hannibal had been replaced by a hundred others who had Hannibal's strength, courage, people, art, armor and everything else, and even more, they would have been able to do all of them, and none of them would have been able to do 1) what Hannibal did; as none of them was able to do to Carthage, not even his brother himself, neither before nor after.

27 So also when David was about to smite Goliath, they would teach him, and put on him armor, and armed him. Yes, dear one! David could not wear the armor, and had another master in mind, and struck Goliath before it could be known how he should do it; for he was also not an apprentice boy, trained in this art, but a master, created by God for this purpose [1 Sam. 17:36 ff].

028 Therefore if the king of Syria had put in Naaman's place a more wise and skillful man than seven Naamans, he would not have been able to keep so good and fine a house in Syria by him. For it was not Syria nor the king who educated Naaman, but God (says the Scripture [2 Kings 5:1]) gave salvation and happiness in Syria through Naaman; he would not have done it through anyone else, as it is no longer written about anyone else. If now also a Phormio had come here, and had wanted to teach this Naaman to keep house and to govern Syria, he would have met it just as finely as that Phormio met Hannibal. Therefore one also speaks in German: Es ist der Mann nicht; item: Der Wirth ist nicht daheim. House and farm, land and goods are always there; but the heirs or landlords and princes are not always there.

1) This is a breviloquy instead of: so they all would not have done that, and none of them would have done that, the 2c.

What one has gained, the following one loses; and again, another following one regains it, where God wants to give it.

(29) We see in daily stories and experiences that parents leave to their heirs a great estate, land and people, finely arranged and ordered, and that the heirs take great pains and trouble to maintain or improve it, and work more than their parents did, but it still melts away and spoils under their hands, and all their work and care is in vain, so that I myself have often heard parents say of their heirs: Ah! our son will not do it. Why not? Is it the same house, estate, land and inheritance, and he is industrious and active? Yes, but it is no longer the same man who is the landlord in the house. With the host the house changes: Novus rex, nova lex, another man, another fortune. For God's wonders do not inherit, nor are they our own or subject to us, like the goods, house and farm. God wants to be free to give such miracle people and precious stones when, where and to whom he wants.

(30) Thus, in all classes, one sometimes finds men who are brilliant and skilled above all others; and among boys or apprentices, one who learns more in one day than another learns in five years. Some, when they look at it, can do it, attack it, and do it well, while others learn and work all their lives, but never do it as well. Mr. Fabian von Feilitz 2) was not a doctor in law; but when he heard a thing, he advised it and hit the mark, since otherwise a doctor would have had to search a thousand sheets, and yet perhaps hardly hit the mark. Why? He was not a learned nor educated, but a created jurist, and did not need Phormion, who had long preached to him about sharp or blunt, about bad 3) or crooked law.

31 Duke Frederick blessed, Elector of Saxony, was created to be a wise prince to rule and keep house in peace, as he was in his time.

2) Compare Tischreden, Cap. 45, § 36, Wakh, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XXII, 1255. There, We elsewhere, the name "Feilitzsch" is written.

3) "Bad" here stands for "straight."

in the Roman Empire, as they say, *lux mundi*. He had the way (as I have subsequently learned from those who were around him) that he let his advisors advise, and he nevertheless did 1) the contradiction, but with such reason and justification that they could not speak against it. Now he had not learned this, nor was he educated for it, but it was in him beforehand; and although some great men and many Phormiones grabbed the reins from him, would have liked to rule him, he still put on his horns and let no one be good or right who wanted to advise him. He also said that his advisors had often advised him almost well and good things, but he had not accepted them, but had quite stubbornly opposed them. Why he did this, he alone knew; but surely God put it into his mind, because he was one of God's miracle workers and was created so. For if he had given it out of his hands and allowed himself to be ruled, his luck and wisdom would have been reversed, and he would have come to the point, through his wise counsel, that he would have had to pick up a spoon and trample a bowl.

32 Thus one reads of Augusto that he wanted to lay down the regency from his hand, but was afraid that it would turn out worse, and kept it. For wise councillors and clever people often pretend to be of great use to princes, but do not know that seven harms lie behind such small benefits. They mean well, of course, but they do not think that God has higher thoughts than they do; just as if he had to approve what they think is good and useful.

I have to say one more thing about him, because he was my dear master and made me a doctor. Once, Doctor Hennig Gödde 2) wanted to teach him housekeeping, and said: "Most gracious sir, why let E. C. F. G. keep fire with green wood and not with dry wood, for it is a nuisance? My dear doctor," he said, "what is good advice in your house is bad advice in mine. So he was a man in all things.

34. but from the measure he has a lot of monkeys and

1) Erlanger: that he.

2) Otherwise also written "Göde"; usually called "D. Henning". Compare Tischreden, Cap. 4, K 82. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XXII, 214.

They have made a few visits with it, and left it behind them. For many (some of whom I have known, some of whom are still alive), when they saw that H[erzog] Friedrich was doing well and making him famous, thought to follow the example, and also wanted to become wise, began to contradict everything that was pretended, and that should be the highest wisdom, that they let no one be good or right, and wanted to be H[erzog] Friedrich with such work. But they were not created Frederick, but made themselves Frederick, and remained nothing else than useless Phormiones, who could talk and wash much wisdom, and yet were neither created nor educated for wisdom. Just as the hypocrites make themselves pious by good works, so the man must first be pious on the inside and then do good works.

Here it was such a ridiculous game, and the bells sounded on their necks and ears, that they could be heard for miles around. And what could be more ridiculous than a monkey wanting to do a man's work? And what could be more foolish than a fool wanting to do a clever man's work? It is just as if the donkey wanted to play the harp and the sow wanted to spin; her paws are subtle and well-skilled for it. The Greeks say: A monkey, even if he were dressed as a king, would still be a monkey.

But it goes like this in the world: Where God builds a church, the devil comes and builds a chapel next to it, yes, countless chapels. Same as here. Wherever there is a fine man, be it in the spiritual or in the secular state, the devil also brings his monkeys and ghouls to the market, who want to do everything, and yet it becomes a vain monkey game and ghoulish work. For they are not the people (says the Scripture) through whom God wants to give happiness and salvation. They, however, the unrighteous people and morose fools, do not mean anything else, because they have to stand, as the righteous wise, generous people do, as if nothing more belonged to it, but to stand thus. But the righteous do not pretend to be wise or active, but they are and do. I have seen one of them who could do everything: If one spoke of wars, then he had slain Hannibal, I don't know how many times; if one said

of right and wisdom, he had fifteen Solomon in his mouth, in his heart a whole swarm of fools; no one was anything, 1) he was it all; therefore they called him Doctor Spieß, because he was a nobleman and Reuter.

37 But his lineage has almost increased, that not only in royal and princely courts are many Doctor Spiess, but also in cities and in the countryside everyone wants to be a Doctor Spieß, and if he can have the regiment, he truly seals it so that one must say: Doctor Spieß has been here. For when it comes to the meeting and to the emergency, the way is found that they are no good, and the cat drops the light, and runs after the mouse, and disappears both, the doctor and the spit, with each other, without that he must be called Doctor Spit. Ah, where there is nothing inside, nothing comes out.

38 Yet it would be unfortunate and untrustworthy if such Asia and Asia were foolish in minor matters, such as housekeeping. But when it concerns land and people, kingdoms, principalities, and such great, important things, both in war and peace, that then one wants to be Hannibal or Naaman, who is nothing more than Phormio or Hanswurst, and yet subjects himself to such works, since he is not the man created to be, that is the wretched devil, and causes misery and all misfortune.

39 Now they begin to praise natural law and natural reason, as if all written law had come from them and flowed from them; and this is true and well praised. But there is the mistake that every man will think that natural law is in his head. Yes, if you were Naaman, Augustus, H[erzog] Friedrich, Fabian von Feilitz, I would believe it; but where do you reckon that you are none of them? If H[erzog] Friedrich put his own words into your mouth and his thoughts into your heart, you would still be nothing other than what you are, and would remain Phormio and Hanswurst, as before, and neither happiness nor salvation should be with you. So also the pagans write, forced by experience. It happens that two do the same work; nor do they say, this one does right, that one does wrong.

1) In the old editions: "jchtes" instead of: something.

right; because it lies with the person. If God wants to have them, it must be right, if it is like Claus Fool. If it is not the person or the man, it is not right, even if nine Solomon were in his head and fifteen Samson in his heart.

(40) If natural right and reason were in all minds, which are equal to the minds of men, then fools, children and women could rule and rule as well as David, Augustus, Hannibal, and Phormiones should be as good as Hannibales; yes, all men should be equal, and no one should rule over the other. What a turmoil and desolate thing should come out of this! But now God has created it so that men are unequal, and one should rule the other, one should obey the other. Two can sing with each other (that is, praise God equally), but not speak with each other (that is, rule); one must speak, the other must hear. Therefore it is also found that among those who presume and boast of natural reason or right, there are many more female and great natural fools. For the noble jewel that is naturally called right and reason is a strange thing among the children of men.

We will leave such miracle-workers of God this time, together with their monkeys and miracle-workers of the devil; for God's miracle-workers, and those of David or Hannibal, are done in such a way that they do not need your and my counsel in their regiment, as they have a better master who creates and drives them. As Aristotle also says in Politicis that such people are the masters and the law itself; and the jura themselves testify that an emperor is the living law on earth.

The apes, however, ought to give them reasonable advice and say that they should do so; but they do not want to do so, but are like the true miracle workers, and do everything according to them. For the devil rides them and leads them; although even the true miracle-workers sometimes decay and try their luck too high; or, when their hour comes for God to take their hand away, because of their presumption and ingratitude, they fall.

2) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Jena². Erlanger: he.

So they realize that then neither counsel nor reason can help any more, and they must perish as Hannibal did. But they feel it well, and their heart tells them quite certainly, when fortune wants to turn, or when they have it over with presumption. Let us now take before us the others who are not miracle workers, nor are they so driven by God.

(43) Here the question arises: Should we learn nothing or follow the good examples of wise and great men? Why are such examples set before us, just as in the spiritual realm the Scriptures set before us Christ and his saints as examples? 1) Answer: Oh who only could! Certainly one should follow good examples in all classes, but so far that we do not become monkeys and play monkey games. For the monkey wants to do all things and follow them; but he does as it is written in the book of the wise: When he saw a farmer splitting a large log, he went and sat on it on horseback and split it with the axe, but he had no shirt on, and the horns fell into his splits, and he forgot to drive in a wedge, so he threw out the axe, jammed and crushed the horns, so that he had to remain a monkey or eunuch for the rest of his life; nevertheless, he had followed the farmer. So it also goes to all of his same untimely successors.

(44) It is said, Let every man examine himself, what he is able, if he will follow another: for we are not all alike. If anyone is so weak that he cannot walk well, it is no disgrace to him that he does not walk in the same way as a strong man, but stand up honestly to him, that he may be led and guided, or walk by a rod until he comes as far as he can, and praise the strong man who walks so far ahead of him. It is said: He who does not have lime must build with mud; and yet he is also called built and followed the lime masons; but not equally well done. And what does a sick person do, that he wants to work or run like the strong man, without spoiling or killing himself the more? So, if

If Doctor Martinus cannot write or preach epistles as well as St. Paul to the Romans or St. Augustine, it is honest for him to open the book and beg a party from St. Paul or St. Augustine and preach after them. If he does not do it so well, nor does he do like them, he should think that he is not St. Paul or St. Augustine, who jump far ahead of him and he follows them.

45 And if Doctor Spiess cannot be as wise and highly reasonable as Duke Frederick or Fabian von Feilitz, it behooves him to go and be taught, or read the books of law, which are set by the heroes of wisdom for the teaching and example of those with little understanding and weak reason, whom they should crawl after, because they cannot run or jump after them from themselves. If Phormio does not know how to win as well as Hannibal, he should stick to Hannibal and learn from him as much as his nature is able to learn; what he does not achieve, he should leave to Hannibal and think that he is Phormio and not Hannibal.

46 But this is the devil and plague of the world, that in all things, in bodily strength, greatness, beauty, goods, countenance, color, 2c. and in wisdom and happiness alone we all want to be equal, since we are the least equal of all; and, what is even worse, each one wants to be above the other in this, and especially Doctor Spiess and Master Phormio, who may also master the right miracle-workers and consider them fools, and no one can do anything right to the disgraceful fools and clever ones; as Solomon says [Proverbs. 26:16], "A fool is more wise than seven wise men who establish justice." The poison of original sin is innate in us, and the bites of the apple, by which the devil has made us wise and like God. That is why fools do not want to be fools, and Doctor Spiess is the greatest doctor, and Master Klügel is the greatest master on earth; these rule in the world. God plagues us with such people.

The pagan Plato also writes that there are two kinds of law, *justum natura*, *justum lege*. I will call it the healthy law and the sick law.

1) Taken by us from Walch's old edition. In the other editions: "as in the spiritual state the Scriptures form us Christ and his saints as an example?"

Call it law. For what happens by the power of nature, that goes through freshly, even without all law, tears well through all laws; but where nature is not there, and should bring it out with laws, that is begging and mending; happens nevertheless no more, because in the sick nature is. As if I had laid down a common law that one should eat two rolls and drink one cup of wine at mealtime. If a healthy person comes to the table, he eats four or six rolls and drinks a jug or two, and does more than the law allows. If a sick person 1) comes to the table, he eats half a roll and drinks three spoonfuls, and yet does no more by such a law than his sick nature is able, or must die where he should keep the law. Here it is better that I let the healthy person eat and drink what and how much he wants without any law. To the sick I give measure and law, as much as he can, so that he does not have to follow the healthy 2c.

Now the world is a sick thing, and just such a fur, since skin and hair are not good on. The healthy heroes are strange, and God gives them dearly; yet they must be governed, if men are not to become wild beasts. Therefore, in the world, it remains a common patchwork and beggary, and is a real hospital, since both princes and lords and all rulers lack wisdom and courage, that is, happiness and God's activity, as the sick lack power and strength. Therefore, one must mend and puzzle here, help oneself from the letters or books with heroic law, sayings and examples, and thus be and remain the pupils of the dumb masters (that is, of the books); and yet never do it as well as it is written there, but crawl to it, and keep to it, as to the benches or sticks, and also follow the advice of the best, who live with us, until the time comes that God again gives a healthy hero or miracle man, under whose hand everything goes better, or even as well as in any book, who either changes the law or masters it so that everything in the country grows and blossoms with peace, discipline, protection, punishment, so that it may be called a healthy regiment, and yet next to it with his life.

is supremely feared, honored, loved, and after his death eternally praised. And if a sick or unequal one wanted to imitate him and be equal or better, God certainly sent him to the plague of the world, as the pagans also write: The children of heroes are vain plagues.

For what is the use of great, high wisdom and excellent hearty good cheer or opinion, if it is not the thoughts that God drives and gives happiness to? They are vain thoughts and futile opinions, even harmful and corrupting ones. Therefore it is very well said: The learned, the perverse. Item: A wise man does no small folly. And all the histories, even of the heathen, testify that the wise and pious men have corrupted the land and the people. All this is said by the self-wise or sick rulers, whom God has not driven, nor given luck to, and yet have wanted to be. So the regiment was too high for them, they could not bear it nor lead it out, so they were crushed under it and perished, as Cicero, Demosthenes, Brutus 2c., who nevertheless were of the measure of wise and understanding people, that they would like to be called light in the natural right and reason, and finally had to sing the miserable lament: I would not have meant it. Yes, dear, the good meaning makes many people cry. Summa, it is a high gift, where God gives a miracle man, whom he himself rules: the same may be called a king, prince and lord with honor; he himself may be lord, like David, Augustus 2c., or councilor at court, like Naaman in Syria.

Therefore also Solomon speaks in his Ecclesiastes [Cap. 9, 11]: "To run does not help to be fast, to fight does not help to be strong, to be rich does not help to be wise; to be pleasant does not help to be able to do everything well, but it all depends on time and luck" 2c. What else is this said, but this much: Wisdom may be there, high reason may be there, beautiful thoughts and clever ideas may be you; but it helps nothing if God does not give and drive them, but everything goes behind.

(51) Let this be said at once enough of the first verse of this Psalm, in which David praises God and gives thanks for His good rule

1) Erlanger: "the sick person".

and households. So that he confesses that he did not establish and maintain it out of his own high reason and wise thoughts, but out of God's cooperation and activity, who gave him everything and promoted and blessed it with happiness and salvation. From this all princes and rulers should learn (as I said) that they are not the ones who rule well, but the one who gives prosperity and blessing to it, so that they do not let the Doctor Spiess and Master Klügel fool them, but trust God and call upon Him to guide their hearts and lead them to blessed rule, and not to withdraw their hand, nor to let them themselves go along in their own wisdom and beautiful advice, and to suppress measly things that are too high for them; For it is of no avail, and the end will be foul and stale.

V. 2. I act carefully and honestly with those who belong to me and walk faithfully in my house.

In these three verses one after the other [vv. 2-4] he shows how he has kept house and ruled his kingdom according to the spiritual state, namely, in the word and service of God; the other four verses show how he has ruled in the worldly state. This is the whole Psalm.

(53) And first of all he says: "I act carefully and honestly with my own, I walk faithfully in my house"; as if he should say: "It is not my reason nor wisdom, O Lord God, that I rule my kingdom and my house so well: As if he should say: "It is not my reason or wisdom, O Lord God, that I rule my kingdom and my house so well, and that I deal honestly and rightly with my own, but it is your blessing and work. Here he indicates two things that he is able to do for his person as a miracle man: First, that he governs his kingdom carefully and honestly, and keeps it by God's word. For so we read also 2 Sam. 6, 2. ff., how David with earnestness and wholeheartedness sought out and set up again the service of God and the ark. "For in the days of Saul," saith he, "we asked not, neither sought we the ark" [1 Chron. 14:3]. As if to say that the service had fallen under Saul, and the ark lay in the dust; but now he brings it forth, and gathers all Israel to it. Item, he also wanted to have the temple built; but God commanded it to his son

[2 Sam. 7, 2. ff.], but nevertheless he instituted many services, and made psalms and strings to God's praise. And Summa, as he also boasts elsewhere in the Psalter [Ps. 60, 8. Ps. 108, 8.]: Deus loquitur in sanctuario suo, that is, I have in my kingdom the right, pure word of God, and blameless, honest doctrine, so that I do not establish or hold idolatry, sects nor divisions, or otherwise erroneous teachers.

(54) This is what he means when he says: "I act carefully and honestly with my own. "Prudently", that is, according to God's word; for this word is also found in the 2nd Psalm, v. 10: "And now, ye kings, be wise", that is, let yourselves be instructed, hear God's word, and you will reign blessedly and happily. So here also: "I act prudently", that is, I let God's word guide me, therefore my reign also goes wisely and happily. But "righteous", that is, blameless and pure, that I let no false faith nor article be mixed in with it; for so this little word is called *Thamim* [XXXX], without blemish, without spot, pure, fine, unadulterated.

55 Truly, this piece may be praised as an example to all kings, princes and lords, as a miraculous work, which they may follow as far as anyone can. For it is not common kings or rulers who imitate David or make him equally good, but God's miracle workers, to whom he gives it in mind and heart, so that they attack it with earnestness and also carry it out. For such earnestness and deeds are not in reason, nor in natural law. All kings and princes, if they follow nature and the highest wisdom, must become God's enemies and persecute his word, as the 2nd Psalm, v. 1. 2. says: "Why do the nations rage, and the kings rebel against the Lord and his Christ?" All the histories of all kingdoms show this, that even in the Jewish kingdom hardly three kings are praised very well, and David is the only example of all of them; the others have all ruled with idols and false prophets, and have persecuted and murdered the true prophets and condemned God's word.

56. therefore it is not surprising that world

These kings, princes and rulers are enemies of God and persecute his word; it is their nature, inherent in them, and the nature and characteristic of reason, that they have no other grace or understanding to think or do. Therefore the other psalm paints such color in their helmet and shield, and calls them adversaries of God and of his Christ. And we see that this is the way things are in the world, as it is written in the psalm.

But where there is a king, or a prince, or an Abel, who take care of God and His word with earnestness, yes, with earnestness (I say), you may well consider them to be God's miracle workers, and call them strange wild beasts in the kingdom of heaven. For they do not do this out of reason or great wisdom, but God stirs their hearts and drives them in a special way, so that they do not resist God like other kings and lords, but promote his word, following the example of David, as far as God gives them and helps them.

For if reason or high intellect were sufficient for such a miraculous work, our kings, princes and lords in the German lands would long ago have opposed God's word differently. For there is no lack of high reason; thus God's word is presented so powerfully, brightly and clearly with preaching, singing, saying, writing, painting, that they must confess it to be the right word of God, and have nothing more to say against it than that it was not started by them or ordered in the Concilio. Therefore they do not call it heresy, but novelty and impiety. Now what is the use of their high reason? What does it help that they know and see that it is right? Truly, if this should help, then they would have come these ten years ago well above David; for he did not find and had it so powerful and clear.

(59) But God did not choose them to be such miracle workers and to perform such miracles at His word and service. Therefore he lets them remain unseparated, in the common crowd of the other kings and princes, who, as the 2nd Psalm, v. 2, says, persecute God and his Christ; as Solomon also says [Eccl. 7:14]: "Behold the works of God, that no man can better him whom he despises." But

but they are not excused by this. For even if they do not have the grace to perform miracles in the service of God, they should do them as much as they can, or at least not oppose and persecute them. How said Julius, [the] pope? If we do not want to be pious, let us not prevent other people from being pious.

(60) Truly, David began the little song on a high note, singing that he had ruled wisely and blamelessly; who can know or imagine how much and great opposition he had to suffer in it, and even take upon himself many a great hatred? It will not have pleased all the great and the rich that he has cleared up all idolatry and trouble, and kept everyone to the one pure worship. Of course, they also praised their old noses as the best, and did not like to let their former fathers' customs and habits be taken or changed: and if there was a people on earth that held fast and hard to idolatry, it was David's people, that is, the Jews.

61 In David's legends it is well known that many were secretly hostile to him, and when they gained space, they helped him to push, to chase, to plague, and to do all kinds of harm: yet he sang it out, and dared everything to God and his word. Therefore he can sing with all honor before all kings, as an example: "I act carefully and honestly with my own. Keeps therefore the finest order, according to Christ's teaching, Matth. 6, 33.: "Seek first God's kingdom, and His righteousness, and all the rest shall be added unto you." But a man belongs to this, who may dare and attack, driven and guided by God.

And walk faithfully in my house.

62) Secondly, because he has so divinely governed his kingdom, he has also drawn his household to God's word, so that he may not (as St. Paul [1 Cor. 9:27] says) teach others and himself become criminal; who earnestly commands the bishops, that is, pastors and preachers, that they should first govern their own households well, chaste and quiet wives, obedient and pious children.

so that they do not annoy the Christians more with their housekeeping, nor do they improve with preaching; and he decides straight away [1 Tim. 3:5]: "How can they preside well over the church, if they preside evil over their own houses? There is no other way. He who is in earnest to serve the church faithfully and to punish sin can certainly not suffer that his house, wife, and child should live wantonly and wantonly. But if he lets his house live unrighteously and according to his will, he will certainly not take great care of the church and others. So he is no longer a priest or preacher, but a wolf and the devil's companion, as he allows the devil to do as he pleases in his home and in the churches, as the pope, bishops and priests have done and still do.

63 Thus, if a king or prince at court or in office can suffer blasphemers and despisers of his word or enemies, and lets them publicly lead an evil, shameful life, do violence and injustice to people, and does not punish and defend them where and how he can, what would help them, if he were to fiercely promote God's service, word and honor in the whole country? One would say of him, Luc. 4, 23: "Physician, help yourself"; and in German: Hans, take yourself by the nose. For the others look more at his court, servants and officials than at his command, and they follow his example more than his command, and excuse themselves with his example against his own command. So then, what he builds with his hands, he tramples and breaks with his feet.

64 But how it went over David is to be reckoned with. For the courtiers and officials like to be free and would rather be lords of the land themselves, and they are, too, where David does not rule. And if they have to do it, which they do not like to do, they can nevertheless watch and lurk until they see their time, and they can hide their bogus eyes and their mischievous faces for a while; as the mischievous Ahitophel was David's closest and best counselor for a long time, and at the end he helped him to trample him underfoot, and soon after paid himself and took over with his own hands.

Thus a margrave of Meissen said: "A lord should not be afraid of those who are far away from him, but of those who follow him at first, because they would much rather step on his head.

66. And it is true that when God wills a prince and a country well, he gives him a fine Joseph or Naaman to be around him, by whom all things go well and prosper; as also Sirach says [Cap. 10:5]. But if he wants to harm a prince, he gives an Ahitophel also to the pious David at his side and on his heels, who can thus stand (as Scripture says of Ahitophel [2 Sam. 16, 23]) as if God spoke through him, and also deceives the pious David himself for a time. So it is very difficult at court to recognize the great larvae of the devil and to govern them, that God must here (where it should go well) govern the Lord Himself against all courtiers, or give a pious Joseph, in whom the prince's trust is not lacking; otherwise it truly does not go off without harm, both to the prince and his people.

67 And who can tell the cunning and wickedness of the noble servants at court and in the offices? And even if one could tell it all and describe it in detail, what good would it do? It would not make them any better, but, like the Jews from Christ's good sermons, much worse. A pious householder or burgher cannot rebuke a wicked servant or maid, that is, make a little wretch pious, and must suffer, where he wants to punish one wretch, that the wretch does him two greater wretches in return, especially where the regiments are slack and loose: how then will a prince or lord alone make so great and so many wretches pious in his court and country? Especially when they want to be so free and powerful, and also make a secret Catherin or Käthen together against their lord, who may well be called bound to a beautiful iron maiden Kätthe.

A householder walks on foot, and often bumps against a wood or stone, and gets up again, even if he limps a little; but a prince and lord is a great householder, who rides large, expensive stallions, which want to be a part of his life.

The stallions are full of the best fodder, have the bridle free and long, do not suffer the spurs, go crosswise in the alley, beat around, bump, bite, be very highly honored and feared under the saddle and jewelry of their master; finally, when the mood and the rumbling arrives, lay the master on the pavement, so that country and people have to refresh and cool on him. Let these stallions be drawn and taught by another than I, and let such a hare's head be stalked by the devil, 1) for such game belongs to such a hunter.

69. Therefore, if one of the two does not happen, either that God gives grace to the servants, so that they themselves may willingly be pious Joseph and Naaman, on whom the Lord may rely; or that the Lord may give a feared, serious, strict courage of a hero, who must be almost half-Matthew 2) or tyrannical, and trust no one at all; So one may mend and punish as much as possible, be patient besides, and think that God is not at home, and has withdrawn his grace from the same country to punish sin, and that such punishment is better than a worse one, because it cannot be otherwise; as the examples are many in the books of Kings.

(70) What could Samuel do, since his king Saul let himself be seduced by Doeg and others to do great harm? And Jeremiah also had to see under the pious king Zedekiah 3) all the misery that the court servants were doing, until God came upon them with punishment.

It is the greatest plague of kings and princes (especially of the pious ones) that they not only have to suffer unfaithful, false, bad boys as the "greatest" lords in the land, but also put and make them; like David Ahitophel, Solomon EderEser. It happens to them in the large household, like the citizens in the small household, where one must suffer and take a thief and a knave as a servant, and a whore and a thief as a maid.

I have often heard Emperor Frederick the Third say how the princes in the empire

He had complained that he had allowed the "Brüheschenken" to rule at court. He once replied to this: Yes, it is certainly not theirs, he also has a brewer's gift at his court. One notices in this and other things that the same Emperor Frederick truly did not lack wisdom, reason and power; but the courage and thoughts that should do it were not given to him by God. If he had been a Matthiaske 4), he would have put brewing gifts together with early morning and evening gifts, and still he would have gone out. Therefore, because he was not the miracle man who could make a new fur, he had to mend and patch the old bad fur as much as he could, let the other go, and let God make it. Not much better before him was Emperor Sigismund, a fine, highly intelligent, pious, feminine man, since there was no lack of reason and power, but too little to the things of his time, with thoughts and happiness.

Therefore Solomon says 16:1, 2: "A man's heart is his own, but from God comes what the tongue should speak. Each man's ways seem pure, but only the Lord makes the heart sure." O such and such like sayings are great, excellent, and quite royal sayings against the wise and conceited. It is good to do well (he says), and the way is pure, right and deliciously good; hui! now quickly done, because it looks so fine to us. Yes, he says, it is truly his intention, and it would be good that it should be so; but it is written that God must also be there, and not only teach the tongue how it should speak and counsel, but also how the heart and courage should be sure and fresh, so that it may work out well. If this is not there, then the fine, pure way and the beautiful counsel are nothing at all, so that you cannot speak properly with your tongue, nor think properly with your heart, and the beautiful way follows the path of cancer, and the fine counsel turns into shameful foolishness and harmful ruin, both of the master and his subjects. And it serves them right. For they want to do what they were taught to do by

1) On this proverb, compare St. Louis Edition, Vol. VIII, 1905, note I.

2) On Matthias of Hungary, compare Table Talks, Cap. 65, K 7. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XXII, 1470.

3) In the old editions: Sedechia.

4) Cf. § 69.

God are not created, want to jump, because they can not walk, and count money out of an empty pocket, and the like Gaukelwerk treidelt.

74 Thus let this piece, which David sings here about divine stewardship, be a miracle that God has given him to do, above all his high reason and ability, and let it be an example set for all other lords, whom they should follow, each one as much as he is able; except that he should not do better than David, and should not sing such a song any higher, otherwise he will certainly get mad and make a sow before he reaches five notes. For the Germans also say: The evil of the fall is for him who does it better than he can; et factum est ita. It also happens that they fall terribly when they overdo it, and get the right falling sickness, that they should rather jump over two stairs than do such a fall. And the pagans say: Tu nihil invita facias tentesque Minerva. ¹⁾ Et iterum: Quod natura negat, nemo feliciter audet, what you cannot lift, leave it. For they have it in experience that no great man or miracle man has ever been sine afflatu, that is, without a special inspiration from God, yet mighty and much wiser men, and highly rational men have always been. And Jeremiah also writes that God aroused and drove the courage of the Medes and Persians against Babylon.

75. these words, "with those who belong to me," are in Hebrew, Mathai Thabo elai [XXX XXXX XXX], and will perhaps make it me the strict rabbis will not let it be good that I have Germanized it so freely; but I prefer good sense to their quarrelsome letter. I say this so that they will not think that I did it out of ignorance or lack of knowledge. For David wants to say: What comes to me, or as long as it comes to me; that is what belongs to me 2c. And herewith is also touched a miraculous virtue of David, which is called: Wait of thine own, and that which is commanded thee.

76 For it is a common vice and harmful vice in all the world, in all classes; when it comes to the court, it is not much use either, and is called in Greek

To have much to do where nothing is commanded, and to leave much where much is commanded. The Latins call it: Foris sapere, domi desipere; meanwhile I will call it lazy wit, and it is also one of the fruits of original sin, naturally innate and inherent in us, that each one soon gets tired of what he is commanded to do, mixes and strikes himself in other things, which he would do idly and which are not commanded to him, wants to be clever and busy in other things. The unstable mercury, where one wants it, there it does not remain; thus, what these should do, they cannot do, but what they choose, they must do.

And, that I may be the highest, the pope, bishops and the whole papacy should well wait for the gospel and the souls, so they have the lazy rogue here in the back, must rule worldly for it, wage war, seek temporal wealth; and they do that gladly, and are wise. Again, worldly kings should wait for the reign, but they must stand in church, hear mass, and be completely spiritual. As they now interfere in the cause of the Gospel, they forbid what God has commanded, as, in both forms of the sacrament, Christian freedom, marriage, according to the example of Pope Benedict.

Also, at the imperial congresses of this virtue, one commonly finds that the necessary things are moved, prevented, and often even left behind.

So, where a David or a miracle man does not rule at court, it is certain that Squire Faulwitz is very clever and has a lot to do, since he is not commanded to do anything; but what he is commanded to do stinks and disgusts him, and cannot wait; it also serves to mislead and hinder all the others with his masters. Here it is not right for him in the kitchen, there in the cellar; here in the office, there in the council chamber. However, he neglects his own order, so that nothing happens.

80 Now he does not do much harm by giving better advice to others where he can; for one should praise such people who first carry out their own office well, and then give good advice to others, especially where it is desired and publicly necessary. But he 2) Faulwitz respects

1) Horatii ars postier", v. 313.

2) "He"-Mr.

He is not concerned with his actions and orders, and in the face of great prudence is preoccupied with other things that are not necessary or required, or, in the face of great laziness, does something else himself that he desires.

81. he is also a useful guest among Christians when he comes among them, and teaches the pastors to pray, or to do a lighter thing when they are to study and preach, or drives the laity to the outward ceremonies, and makes faith and love prevail; as Christ says: "They have tasted mint and till, and have left off the most grievous things in the law. 2c. [Matth. 23, 23.]

In housekeeping, when servants and maids do what they think is good, but do not do what they are told, they still want to do well. They adorn a house finely, and are quite a useful, blissful servant. Yes, like the servant with the three blackbirds, of whom it is said that his master sends him out to look for the lost cows, and he stays outside so long that his master runs after him to see where he is. When he comes almost close to him, he asks the servant: Have you found the cows? No, said the servant, but I have a better healthy. What did you find then? The servant said: Three blackbirds! Where have you got them? Said the servant, "One I see, another I hear, and the third I chase. Is not this a wise and diligent servant? Should not a householder become rich with such servants?

Here belong those of whom it is said: They pick up a spoon and tread down a bowl, or, where there are great goods, as in kings' and princes' courts, where they spoon in and spoon out, make a great reckoning. When they have offered the king one florin, all ears and eyes must be filled with how great counsel has been given; but when many thousands of florins have been wasted, no rooster crows.

But nowhere is he so good as among the men of war. If they open their mouths and do not wait for their entrenchments with great diligence, they are blown to pieces and must then say: "See, I did not mean that. But who can illustrate all the examples of the scoundrel, when he reigns mightily everywhere, where masters and fathers of households do not watch diligently themselves?

85 Therefore David saith, I will take care of mine own, and wait for them that are about me. Let other kings also take care of their own, lest, when I am too wise and busy with strangers, I neglect myself and my own. And David may well give thanks for such virtue; for it is indeed a fine, lovely thing and God's special gift for a brave, industrious man, who waits for his own with diligence, and makes it his business with earnestness, especially in God's word, and does not let foreign business err. Obedience is the crown and honor of all virtue; but if slothfulness is found in it, then the dunghill, or (as Isaiah calls it) the rain of sloth, has corrupted it, and it becomes a vain scribbler, a bungler, a soaker, who neglects much, and can neither make nor do anything for love or thanksgiving to anyone.

For this reason, St. Paul teaches the preachers and bishops in 2 Timothy 2:4 that a servant of Christ should not be involved in worldly rule, but, as he also says in Romans 12:7, he who is a teacher should wait to teach and not let anything else or better hinder him. For he has seen that in the future the bishops would leave the ministry of preaching and seek the worldly things. And Christ, when he was asked by one to make his brother share with him, said, "Man, who has made me a judge? [As if to say, "Let me not be sworn in this matter; go to those who are commanded to do so; I am a preacher who is commanded to do otherwise.

Follow in the Psalm:

V. 3. I will not take an evil thing for myself. I will punish the transgressor and not let him stay with me.

So far he has thanked God that He has given him grace to believe rightly and to serve God, both in His kingdom and in His house, that he has not committed idolatry nor false doctrine or worship, and thus has done what was good and pleasing in the sight of God. Here he praises and thanks God that he has also given him the other gift, that he has kept himself from evil, false worship.

and thus to remain steadfast and firm in the good and right faith. For where God gives His word and service, the devil does not celebrate to spoil it or to hinder it.

Therefore it is not enough to start well and do right, but it is necessary to persevere and not be carried away or provoked, as Christ says [Matt. 24:13], "He who perseveres to the end will be saved. Non minor est virtus, quam quærere, parta tueri. And in the worldly state it is the same: He who cannot also defend himself will not be able to nourish himself for long. What is the use of gaining a lot, and not being able to defend anything, nor to keep it from enemies? So, what is the use of starting and getting God's word, faith and service right, and not being able to stay with it, nor to keep it against the devil? but to be driven by all kinds of wind, as St. Paul says Eph. 4, 14: Let us grow and become strong in Christ, so that we do not, like children, let ourselves be carried about with all kinds of wind of doctrine 2c.

89. So now he says, "I do not take upon myself an evil thing." Evil thing; in the Hebrew it is written: Verbum, seu rem Belial. Belial some make the devil's name; and often in Scripture it is written: The children of Belial, these are bad boys, wicked people, who are neither obedient to GOD nor to men. I think St. Paul, when he calls the end-Christ anomus, wicked, 2 Thess. 2, 8, meant this word Belial. For Belial, as the Hebrews say, is called absque iugo, who does not want to be subject, as the end-Christ exalts and sets himself above everything that is called God 2c. The devil also so. Therefore it rhymes well here, since David thanks God that he also protected himself from all evil, and did not let himself be turned away from his right faith and good nature, which he led under God's word, nor did he let it lure him away.

90 Now it is indeed a great thing to stand firm on the right way against all devil's chapels, agitations, deviations, superstitions and false teachings. For false doctrine and false preaching always have the most beautiful appearance, the greatest and most followers of the mighty, wise, rich, and holy on earth; while the right way is despised and has no followers, heresy and devilry must be added to it.

teachings. Belial alone is the most beautiful devil who can disguise himself into an angel of light and make God's word darkness in the hearts of men.

This can be seen in David's Psalter, how diligently he guarded himself and warned others, as Ps. 1, 1: "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked" 2c. And especially he made the 119th Psalm on it, which is read at the prime, third, sixth, ninth in the monasteries and convents. As if he should say: "It is a great thing who has the right doctrine of God and may hear His word; but it is so great who can also stick to it and keep it pure and fine against Belial and his servants, who always oppose it; as St. Peter warns us, 1b. Peter warns us, 1 Ep. 5:8: "Be sober, and watch; for your enemy the devil walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; which resist with steadfast faith." Here you hear that it must not be the milk faith that begins to serve God, but the firm faith that must resist Belial and his evil things.

(92) There is no doubt that David, in the beginning of his kingdom, found many errors and abuses among his people, which until then had been established under Saul and remained, with whom he had much to do, and felt great resistance; for he often and miserably complains in the Psalter about the false teachers. For (as said [§ 89. 90]) Belial not only lures from the right path with the great, glorious appearance of lies, and with the despised, miserable form of truth, but also does it by force of tyrants, since body, property and honor are in danger, there is always cross and suffering, hatred and persecution, but the false saints are quite free, safe and happy children. Item, there are also good friends and relatives with faithful advice and good opinion, next to the example of the great crowd of the powerful, rich, wise in the world. The weakness of our own flesh and the old Adam are also involved, so that it is difficult and sour to remain firm and to endure the end. Therefore the Holy Spirit has so much to do and comforts his own, as Ps. 27, 14. and.

31, 25. "Be of good cheer and undaunted, all ye that wait upon the LORD." And Sirach says [Cap. 2, 1. 2.], "Dear son, if thou wilt serve GOD, send thy heart to temptation; hold fast, and be not enticed nor frightened by it." 2c.

93. Although such a piece is a great miracle that he himself remains so steadfast and constant in God's word and service against all kinds of trouble, and keeps himself pure from all kinds of evil of the devil and his mobs, it is still much higher that he subsequently boasts that he hates the transgressor, that is, I not only hold fast to God's word and service for myself and my person; but, where I also notice one of my servants, or those who belong to me, who transgresses, and speaks or does differently than God has commanded, I am an enemy to him. Now it was not lacking, he had many a fine man, who was otherwise dear and valuable to him, as he was useful and necessary in his house and kingdom; for often the wicked have from God many fine, high gifts and skill in worldly things, which one cannot well do without in the house or in the regiment, against which the pious cannot be disciples. Just as Ahithophel, at that time, went far beyond all the wise and prudent in the kingdom of David, that his counsels were respected (as the text says [2 Sam. 16, 23. He was a wicked man, a traitor and a mischief-maker in his heart, and after that David feared no one so much, and prayed against him, saying, "O Lord, make the counsel of Ahithophel foolish" [2 Sam. 15:31].

Such useful, wise, female people, who do so much good in the kingdom and in the house, and have earned themselves so well, and yet are ungodly, wicked boys, hate and leave for God's sake, there belongs a man who can do more than eat bread. For it seems that if they were not there, the kingdom would perish and no savings would remain in the house. Therefore, if a lord or landlord is to hate and leave such useful servants, he must certainly have a lion's heart, and be a miracle man in God, who can put his kingdom and house in the redoubt, and rely solely on God.

and say, "Well, before I suffer my God's enemy in my kingdom or house, I will rather let everything perish, and think, "He who gave me this kingdom or house can give me another and even more. Abraham had to think that when God told him to sacrifice Isaac, the promised son, God would raise Isaac from death, Hebr. 11:19.

95 For it is so in the world, especially in the court of the lord, that there is little Joseph or Naaman, but much Ahithophel and Ziba; who do, as that abbot saith, 1) His humble brethren stooped very low toward him; but they mean not me, but look for the keys of the girdle. So they serve at court a lot, and do a lot of good, not for the sake of the lord, but think by the keys, so that they can take the lord and break the claws, so that the lord can neither hate them nor leave them afterwards with any good reason or right. But if he does so, 2) then the calendar and register is full of all virtue, more than days in a year they have done in the kingdom and house, and then throw dirt and excrement at the Lord, spit at him: Fie on you, who shall serve such: Lord, on whom all faithfulness and service is lost? then make proverbs and rhymes, which they write on the walls: Dear smock, do not tear, master service does not erbet 2c. item: [Prince's Grace] April weather 2c.

But if he does not, then he must suffer such malice from them against God and his subjects that he cannot answer for it, and must say, "Yes, Squire Ahithophel, you are pious. But they go along freely, as if they had almost done well, and do not think (although they know it well and feel it in their hearts) that they are such evil-doers and scoundrels, who have not only earned no mercy with their evil deeds, but also vain disfavor with their good works; they secretly rejoice that they have fooled dear David as honestly as the shameful Ahithophel. That a pious king and lord is indeed a wretched man, for whom

1) Erlanger: da; Wittenberger and Jenaer: dass.

2) "over it" is here so much as: defsemor-chchtet. This meaning is missing in Dietz.

one should pray well. For if David has not been able to overcome, no ruler or lord (if he wants to please God) should provide for himself that he will be better off.

97 It would have been a bad virtue for such a great king as David to have hated a peasant of Thekoa or Gilo; but to hate the lords of Jerusalem, and of his court, Ziol, is too great, even if it were David himself. But he is something more than the David of Bethlehem, but a hero and miracle man, who tears through and lets God rule, who is his Lord; and if he should lose a hundred Ahitophel, then he would rather keep his Lord God, who is called Almighty, and can create and give many, many kingdoms, which 1) he would certainly not deserve any of his bad boys (if he should tolerate), because he would guard them in heaven with his own hands.

98 Again, it is a shameful thing that happens in the world and at court, that many a fine man serves faithfully and well, and then is miserably abandoned or even rejected, and another rogue comes in his place, who then takes everything that he has earned, so that he could not lure a dog out of the oven. Jesus Sirach writes a powerful saying about this, Cap. 26, 25-27: "There are two things that grieve me, and the third thing that provokes me to anger: when a man of valor is made to suffer poverty at last, and the wise counsellors are despised at last, and he that departeth from the right faith" 2c. If this did not happen at court, how could Sirach have known or said this? And this is what the most insignificant bumblebees do, which the earth carries, which can only spit and wash a lot, and fill the ears of a king or prince, so that he becomes deaf to his faithful servant. Just as the bumblebees, the ineffectual, pest-like vermin, which cannot make honey, eat up everything that the pious little bees make, without being able to scrape, buzz and hum with their wings as much or even more than the right dear bees.

1) In the issues: which.

2) Here "honey" is of the neuter gender, as we see from Z 121 at the end.

So also the pagan Terentius says (not from his own head, but from the words and examples of great lords and wise men): Truly, whoever is as skillful as you are can easily bring upon himself all the honor that other honest people have earned at great cost. This is what he mockingly says about a great, coarse fool and a foul-mouthed bumblebee, whose name was Thraso, who would have been good for nothing, except to protect a weir or fill a ditch with it; although even such honor would have been too much for him; and yet he made such great noise and spittle, as if he were the only one who could not be like him on earth.

(100) But it goes on like this, and the world must suffer such people as its real pestilence, blood boils, Frenchmen, fevers and other misfortunes of the devil, where God Himself does not mercifully keep house, until the hour comes that [it] once ceases. For God remains judge on earth, as the 58th Psalm, v. 12, says, and what is not right must always perish until the last day, when it will all cease at once and forever. But we must suffer that the louse may feed in the bark and walk on stilts in the old coat.

But where there are ungodly kings and lords, who, according to the other psalm, are the adversaries of God and of his Christ, there is no one better or more favorable in the court than such transgressors, of whom Solomon says, Proverbs 29:12: "A lord who delights in lying, his servants are all ungodly. For godless lords must and will also have such servants, and they also like to run and force their way to such lords, so that they become rich, help drive out the pious, or even strangle them. "Lying" is Solomon's term (as is often the custom in Scripture of the same word) idolatry, false worship, false doctrine; as Ps. 4:3: "Ye lords, how long shall my honor be profaned? How do you love vain things so much, and lies so gladly!"

102 And this word here in this verse, "transgressors," also means to depart from God and His word, as a woman departs from her husband. Hos. 5:2: "They slay much and deceive," that is, they practice great idolatry, and thereby provoke the people to deviate, or

Transgression from the right worship. This can also be seen in all the prophets: where a king has been idolatrous, it has struck, and there have been found enough boys who have served the king well, and have driven the pious out of the court and out of the country, so that in Ahab's time there was not one true prophet in the country, while eight hundred others were well fed by the queen Jezabel, as one reads in the first book of the Kings [Cap. 18, 19]. King Saul had the Doeg and his companions, who helped David and his family to put on all the plagues. The Doeg served his master so well that he killed eighty-five priests and destroyed a whole city, Nob, with its women, children, livestock and everything in it, 1 Sam. 22:18, 19, without any cause at all and so completely innocently, only that the priest had given David food in his distress, and had spoken God's word, and did not know otherwise, because Saul still loved David as before, and had to call this good deed rebellion against the king 2c.

In our times, I think, we should see enough examples of how people rage against God's word at court, and protect and strengthen idolatry and lies. The transgressors have much to do, and are intemperate to persecute and strangle the pious; and it is the great fault of the pious that they seek and hear God's word, or that they desire God's works and creatures (as marriage) or His order and sacraments; whether they are obedient and serve with body and goods in the most obedient and willing way, that does not help. But the bloodhounds, the Doegites, see well that [it] is well done with their masters, and carries bishopric, benefices, money and honor. Therefore their desire is to shed innocent blood, and to persecute the saints of God and members of Christ, so that they may preserve their lies and transgressions mightily. David complains about this in many psalms, especially in the twelfth [Psalm, v. 9]: "It is full of the wicked everywhere, where such loose people are exalted." But let it go, it will and must be so, where God does not give grace to His David at His court to hate the transgressors; as is said.

104. thirdly, he says: "I will let him

will not cling to me." So in Hebrew it reads: He must not cling to me; like Gen. 2, 24: "The man will cling to his wife." Hereby he indicates that he not only hates the transgressors, but also hates them constantly, that he will not let them cling to him in any way nor in any way. For the transgressors or false saints are able to masterfully penetrate to the lords or princes, so that they would also like to seduce a chosen David; they know how to turn and drag the lead 1) very finely. King Jehoash was a fine king as long as the priest Jehoiada lived (says the Scripture [2 Kings 12:2]); after Jehoiada's death he was so wicked (no doubt by such sittim or transgressors) that he had Jehoiada's son Zachariam strangled between the temple and the altar; since Christ also says Matth. 23:35, and the Scripture also mournfully laments this 2 Chron. 24, 22: "And Jehoash the king remembered not the good that Jehoiada the father had done for him, but slew his son." And Herod also loved John at first, heard him gladly, and did much (as the evangelists write [Marc. 6, 20]); then he had him beheaded for Herodias' sake. Pious servants often cannot approve of everything that their masters do, and have to contradict it, especially against the transgressors, as this Zacharias did; and the truth is unpleasant, and no one likes to be punished. But a transgressor and a hypocrite does not have such a ride, but can read and listen, speak and do what one likes to hear.

It is indeed a great, great miracle (as David praises here) when a prince should and can hate the transgressors or spiritual scoundrels and devil saints, and thus separate them from him, so that they do not stick to him, cling to him, or remain around him in any way. For no doubt some of David's great princes and lords and friends will have sung sweet songs to him, praised this and that, praised our cousin here and our brother-in-law there, so that they would come to court and soar in high places and regiments, regardless,

1) "Bleuel" a flat wood with a handle for beating. On the grinding of the bleuel, see Bilmar, Idiot. p. 42 Metz).

whether they were pious or not. For one likes to attach such bracelets to the great lords as vain useful gems in the kingdom, where God does not endow them with David's spirit, according to which the false worshippers of God constantly know to avoid.

Now, until then he has praised God, how he himself has remained pure and firm in the right worship and word, and also kept his court and servants there, and hated false servants everywhere and constantly avoided them. Now follows the last verse of his spiritual regime.

V. 4. A wicked heart must depart from me; I will not suffer the wicked.

Here he goes to his court, and visits the whole country in his kingdom, and speaks especially of the false teachers and idolatrous priests, who were now and then in the country. For it is found in Scripture that even Moses himself did not reign so well, idolatry remained under his rule; as St. Stephen Apost. 7, 43. from the prophet Amos [Cap. 5, 25.] scolds the Jews that they carried the idol Remphan with them in the desert and worshipped the idol BaalPeor in the land of Moab, 4 Mos. 25, 3. and so from then on under all judges and prophets (however pious they may have been) secret idolatry always remained to the least, that without doubt not even under David's reign everything was pure and holy. But he was diligent and always resisted, so that it did not break down freely and publicly. For the devil neither celebrates nor sleeps. So the spiritual regiment, truly, must not celebrate nor sleep, otherwise it is lost. For even though one watches and works, it still takes effort and work to keep the word of God pure; what should it become, then, if one sleeps and snores securely? as one, unfortunately, did in the papacy, and let everything fall apart that the devil wanted, and now he is established, he does not want to let himself be cast out, nor does he want to concede a little bit.

(108) Now here, in this verse, the devil and his church are briefly and finely painted, namely, that he has a perverse heart and is wicked. "A perverse heart" is what we call heresy or false doctrine, for it is

pervert God's word and service. They turn the word around and make it better; as, where God commands us to build on His grace alone, and not on ourselves or on men, as He says in Exodus 20:2, 3: "I am your God, you shall have no other gods," they teach us to build on our own work, always creating and teaching other, new ways, and everything must be reversed, as God also does.

Thus he also reverses God's word in paradise, when God said to Adam Genesis 2:17: "If you eat of the tree [of the knowledge of good and evil], 1) you will die. No, said the devil, if you eat of the tree, you will not die, but will become like God. Therefore Christ calls the devil a father of all lies [John 8:44]. For what God (who is truth) speaks, he turns around and makes a lie out of it, as all heretics, his disciples, did afterwards. What God says must be wrong, what they say must be right. And so do our lords of the papacy: what God speaks must be heresy; what they speak (whether they know and confess that they speak against God's word), that speaks the holy Christian church and the spirit of Christ, whether one knows that the devil calls them to speak so. This is the first piece of the heretics, which is called "a perverse heart". Of course, a perverse heart will also have perverse words and deeds. For "a hasty wicked man (saith Christ Matth. 12, 35.) bringeth forth evil upon his wicked treasure".

Evil" means harmful, murderous, bloodthirsty people. For an idolatrous man, if he has first killed God's word in the heart through lies and idolatry, he can much less let people live through envy and hatred. That is why Christ calls the devil a liar and murderer. His children, the false teachers and liars against God's word, must be similar to the same father. Just as Cain, when he fell from the truth into lies, had to become a murderer, and since he could not commit it on anyone else, he had to prove it on his own brother.

111 But where they cannot or may not kill, they do not refrain from harming.

1) The bracketed words are missing in the Erlanger.

do. They are called and are evil, that is, envious, poisonous, harmful people, who day and night seek to do harm and damage, and although they cannot kill the body with their felling, nor help it with their counsel or heart, yet they do not lack a complete, whole will and desire, and their greatest sorrow is that they cannot do enough evil. Therefore Solomon [Proverbs 1:16] and Isaiah [Cap. 59:7] say that their feet are quick to shed blood. False doctrine and murder want and must be with each other, as all Scripture, all histories and daily experience testify. The devil wants to have man completely dead, the soul by lies, the body by murder. Therefore, where he does the first, he quickly penetrates the other, and where the serpent enters with his head, he certainly pulls the tail in, and wants to be completely inside.

(112) And such lies and murders are first of all the true devil, if they are worse than Cain's lies and murders, who had no pretense of his wickedness, which was a simple mischievousness, and his wickedness, which was simple wickedness; for he did it not as a service of God, but out of anger and revengefulness. But the hypocrites, the right liars and murderers, make a service out of it, and do it out of zeal for God's honor and the salvation of souls; as Christ says John 16:2: "They will put you under ban (that is, they will condemn your truth as blasphemy and deceive souls, to preserve their lies, that is, God's praise and honor, and to preserve the salvation of souls), and whoever kills you will think he is doing God a service." For with this they want to prevent that the whole multitude must die or be punished by God, as Lord Caiphas also gave the same holy, divine advice, saying [John 11:50]: "It is better to kill one man than that all the people should die." It is a wise, delicious counsel, and reigns mightily in the world.

These far surpass their arch-father Cain, and are two-fold liars and murderers. The first lie is that they fall from the truth and do not have God's word. The other, that they have used their lies for truth and

They want to hold worship, and have done great worship by condemning and blaspheming the truth; yes, they are sevenfold liars and murderers, because they fall away from the truth and cling to lies. Then they want to take the lies for truth, and the truth for lies, and defend them, and finally they condemn and blaspheme the truth as the devil's word, and praise their lies as God's word; thus they make God out of the devil, and God out of the devil, put hell into heaven, heaven into hell. So, the first murder is to kill people; the other, to consider such murder as a preservation and endowment of life, and to do service to God with it; and consider it right that they should not grant life to any heretic (as they call it), and be guilty of not granting it to them, and condemn all those who consider such murder to be murder and wickedness, wanting badly to have considered it a benefit and salvation of life.

But where shall we put our liars and murderers, the Junker Papists? They are three times worse than these. For their lies and murder have no appearance as if it were worship. They know that their lies are lies against God's word, and that their murder is murder, not for God's service; and there is no leaf of ignorance here that would cover them, like those; and yet they are not simple lies and murder, like Cain's lies and murder, but they make a pretense of their own by force, against their conscience. And they do nothing else than to say in effect: "We know well that our lies are lies against God and his word, and we have neither reason nor cause to pretend that we could boast of them as truth. But nevertheless, we want to violently, wantonly, and knowingly drag the name of God here and desecrate it, and have made and kept up the pretense that our lies are God's word, and have the devil for a god, and again God for a devil; and whoever does not want to keep this, let him die, and nevertheless keep such wickedness and murder for God's service and salvation of life; although we ourselves know that it is murder and wickedness, and that God's service may not be thought of or kept up with some pretense.

These are the last and final liars and murderers, who bring it to the third and lowest hell. Therefore, no example can be made of them, nor can they be said to be superior, and they have no equal, and they alone belong to the kingdom of the end of Christ, which should be an unspeakable abomination. For how can men become more wicked, if the devil himself cannot be more wicked or more wicked? But before the end of the world and until the last day, the devil must have such saints, and thus force Christ to keep the last judgment the sooner.

And that we come back to David, that would have been enough for royal virtue, that David would have remained innocent of all lies and murder in his kingdom, that he would not have had an evil conscience, set up some lies or idolatry, nor guilty of some murder or innocent blood. For let us also recognize this as a gift of God, where a man, especially a prince, can be free with a good conscience, that he has not been the cause of some error or some deceived souls, nor of any murder, nor of any drop of innocent blood, because of these kings and princes, even in some of God's people, little is found, the others have all remained in the common heap of kings, which the Holy Spirit describes in the 2nd Psalm, v. 2. Psalm, v. 2, enemies of God and His Christ, so that He may clearly judge them as liars and murderers against God's truth and service, and thus count them among the terrible bunch of bloodhounds and devil saints, over all of whom the innocent blood shall come, which was shed from the beginning of the race, from the first blood of St. Gabriel to the last blood of the saints [Matth. 23, 35].

But dear David is highly gifted and such a noble, special hero that he is not only innocent of all lies and murders that would or might happen in his kingdom, but also stands against such liars and murderers, does not want to suffer them, and fights with all his might so that they have to leave. Oh, what a great multitude of false teachers, idolaters, and heretics he has had to expel here, or shut their mouths, so that they are not allowed to make a noise or move. But on the other hand, he has punished all pious, faithful, right teachers.

He not only allowed the people space, freedom, peace, protection, protection and entertainment, but also sought out, demanded, called, ordered and commanded them everywhere to preach the word of God purely and loudly and to serve God righteously. As can be seen in 1 Chron. 16, where he himself so diligently instituted, ordered and appointed all worship, and made psalms himself, in which he instructed them how to teach and praise God, and incited and ordered many others to do the same work of making psalms. No, says the dear David, I do not want to suffer the liars and soul-searchers, as well as the bloodhounds and murderers in my kingdom; they shall not so deceive my people, and the faithful priests and teachers shall not so murder or persecute, but they shall depart, and I will not suffer them, so that the right teachers may safely, freely and joyfully praise my God, and preach to the people in a useful and blessed way.

O, what a beautiful, lovely kingdom this has been, when God's word has once also received a pious, faithful king! There everything had to stand very well, green and blossom in all wisdom and virtue; as God's word does not remain without virtue. That is why the noble book, the Psalter, was made at that time, the like of which has not been found among the people. Of course, there were more learned men in the Scriptures at that time than ever before or since among the people, and none will be equal to this high school of David, whether it be high or low. "As the ruler is (says Sirach [Cap. 10, 2.]), so are his officers, as the council is, so are the citizens"; for where the king himself attacks the things and goes ahead, there it must well go.

But how strange such kings are, and how short their work lasts, is shown by the example of his son Solomon, who first improved and decorated the work of his father, but finally, when he grew old, he let the women fool him and make fun of him, and founded idol churches and idolatry. That is why he could not sing this royal psalm to the end, like his father David, who also made two other psalms in which he praised his great gift and thanked God for it, as if the sixth psalm had been sung.

The first Psalm, in which, v. 1, he calls his kingdom a golden rosebush of God, because [v. 8] God speaks in his sanctuary, that is, God's word was in his kingdom.

Now that the purpose has been achieved, David has set himself as an example and masterpiece for all pious kings and lords, how to seek God's kingdom and His righteousness first, and how to keep the subjects faithful to the word of God and to the pastors or preachers, not allowing the evil spirits and perverse, evil hearts to deceive the souls and to murder or persecute the innocent. Whoever is able, and as much as he is able by the grace of God, let him follow and do his best. No one will ever do the same as David, who has the advantage over all kings and lords, because he has done it too well. But every man can be at least careful that he is not in the company of murderous kings and princes, or, as the second Psalm, v. 2, says, the enemies of God and Christ, so that he does not help or give cause to the evil spirits to deceive souls and shed the innocent blood of righteous teachers and Christians. Nevertheless, it will be enough trouble and work for him to keep the preachers and God's word in the country; especially in our times, when people are so terribly ungrateful and scornful, and the devil is enraged beyond all measure, that it must be grasped that he wants to go out with the people so that they will henceforth be completely free, without all preaching and teaching.

For, now that they have been freed from the papal coercion and its manifold deceitfulness, they think to be completely free and free from all God's obedience and service; they would also like to be free from all worldly rights and order, and the devil has them full, both spiritual and worldly rebellion, against God and man. And those who seek, indeed need, such freedom from the pope most of all, as bishops, princes, canons, nobility, who want to keep other people under the pope with great force; for they do not give a straw for all papal teaching, they alone want to have such freedom. And in spite of the pope, that he now gives the bishops

and princes, as he did before, they should become Lutheran against him seven times, and force him a little bit, 1) as Luther did, which they will finally do, as Revelation John 17:16 predicts. Other people, that is, the Lutherans, who have earned such freedom at great cost, shall remain under the Pope's compulsion and publicly recognized lies, or die and be driven out. That is, we shall be the diligent bees that make the honey, but they, the lazy bumblebees, want to eat the honey.

For this reason I say this, whoever wants to accept it as a warning, because everything and everyone almost wants to be free, and despises God's word. For there is an old prophecy among the images of the end of Christ, which says that at the end of the world, when the deception of the end of Christ will be discovered, people will become wild and crude, fall away from all faith, and say that there is no more God, and thus live in all wantonness, according to their own lusts 2c. (2 Thess. 2, 3.). Such old images truly move me very much, and are especially true. For not to have God means to believe neither this nor that, but to be free from all teaching and preaching that is done under God's name. For one cannot have God except by word and faith alone, just as St. Paul says [Eph. 2:12] that the Gentiles were without God before, when the world was full of gods, but they had neither word nor faith from God. And also [2 Thess. 2, 4.] says that the end-Christ will rise, not above God (for that is impossible), but *supra dictum et cultum Deum*, that is, above God's word and service.

Such epicuri and God-rejecters are now publicly tearing into Germany, as it was torn into Welsh country before, and (unfortunately) wants to become a Welsh regiment, both in worldly and spiritual state. This was brought in by the Curtisans and Landsknechte, as they have seen and learned in Rome and in the Welsh country; with the same Welsh regiment will also come the Welsh plagues and misfortunes; so it is over with Germany, and will be called *fuit*.

124. once a fine man talked to me.

1) zwagen - zwacken.

Man (and why should I not call him), He Assch von Cram blessed, and asked whether men of war (where they would otherwise be believers) could also take pay with a good conscience? I also answered in writing. 1) Among other things, there were speeches (I don't know how) about the great usury, which is called the envelope, both word and deed, unknown to me before. How, I said, do people not have a conscience that is afraid of God's judgment and hell? Yes, he said, they speak thus: Do you think that there is still a guy in this guy? Such a word stung my heart, because I had neither suspected nor worried about such impudent speech in the German land. But God grant that they are few among the nobility and not many among the peasants.

For such companions will help the dear gospel to descend very soon and in a hurry, and to bring the last darkness, since Christ says [Luc. 18, 8]: "Do you think that when the Son of Man comes, he will find faith? And both he and St. Paul say that the last day will come at night, when it is darkest.

And to this end, the dear noblemen, bishops, cardinals, canons, who are free of semper and proud, help with all their might and full speed; they leave, indeed, make many parishes vacant and desolate, so that the rabble may quickly become raw, wild and pagan, neither hear nor learn anything about God and the salvation of souls; so that one can see how completely pious Epicurians they themselves are, and want to make all the world like them, epicurious as well. Well, it is their office, they should do so; they are not worth better. God's wrath drives them to help the cause to its end, yet they pretend that they do not want to suffer Lutherans; just as if they were serious about keeping and teaching their own papal doctrine, which would be ten times more unpleasant to them than Luther's. *Sed mitte vadere, sicut vadit; quia vult vadere, sicut vadit.*

127 Because such a terrible and completely papal, that is, epicurean and Welsh, nature is concerned, so help whoever can help, and have mercy on the poor youth, our dear

Offspring, in addition to all God's chosen children who are yet to come, and not all of whom have yet been born, who must also come to baptism and to Christ through our service and handing, to which we are also called, and live precisely for the sake of the same; otherwise our faith would be enough for our person, no matter what hour we die. And woe to all woe, where we throw such service and calling to the wind! God will demand it of us and will take account of all the descendants of souls who are neglected by us.

Therefore I say again, let David be who he can be, and do according to his example what each one can do, especially the princes and lords who have authority from God and enough good to do so; and he will give much more, even a hundredfold, and in addition eternal life, as he promises so abundantly [Matth. 19, 29]. And it cannot happen anymore that so much will happen, so that the schools and the preaching chair (which may not give much) will remain, because so many monasteries, convents and fiefdoms are available. The above prophecy will certainly be fulfilled. God grant that we may be found beforehand ([as those who] have done and taught against it) 2) together with all who are dear to us, to have departed in a good hour, and to be done with Lot from the damned Sodom and Gomorrah, amen. This is what is said about the first part of this psalm. The other part of this psalm is the four verses as follows:

V. 5. I will destroy him who slandered his neighbor; I do not like him who has a proud spirit and high courage 2c.

Therefore, David has illustrated with his example how pious kings and princes should serve God, so that by their help and assistance God's word and honor may be promoted and the wrong spirits may be controlled. And thus he led them to the church in a right and Christian way, not, like the hypocrites, to serve God by burning candles or other foolish work, which serves the temporal wealth and honor of false teachers, but, with right earnestness and spirit, to serve the

pure doctrine and God's order, for the benefit of the souls' bliss. Now he gives himself here also as an example in the secular government, how a pious prince should act among the people or subjects, protect each one from the other's violence and iniquity, help to the right and maintain it, and leads him to the right town hall.

It is, praise be to God, now evident enough to all the world how the two regiments are to be distinguished; for the work in Himself also shows such a distinction abundantly enough, even if no commandment or prohibition had been given by Christ about it. For we can see that God scatters worldly rule or kingdoms among the ungodly in the most glorious and powerful way; just as he lets the good sun and rules serve over and among the ungodly, and yet does not establish a word of God or ministry among them, nor does he teach or instruct them through prophets, as he did in Jerusalem among his people. Nevertheless, he calls such worldly rule of the wicked his order and creature, and lets them abuse it as badly as they can. Just as he lets a boy and a whore use his body and soul, yet he wants to be praised (as he is) as a creator, Lord and sustainer of such bodies and souls. From this it must be understood that the worldly kingdom is different and can have its own being without God's kingdom.

Again, we see that he separates his spiritual kingdom so precisely and sharply from the worldly kingdom that he lets his own suffer all misery, misery and poverty on earth; and as little as he gives the godless kingdoms from his kingdom, so little does he give his own from the godless kingdoms. For the emperor at Rome certainly never had the word of God nor prophets, through which he would have arisen and become so powerful and sustained. So also St. Peter and Paul at Rome did not have a footprint wide own nor straw, by which their one might have preserved itself, let alone rule or reign. At the same time both kingdoms were at Rome; one was ruled by the emperor Nero against Christ; the other by Christ through his apostles, Peter and Paul, against the devil. And for the sign that

When Peter and Paul did not reign in the kingdom at Rome, one was crucified and the other beheaded. Now this is the crucifixion and the beheading of the reign of the Holy Spirit on earth. Again, as a sign that Nero did not reign in the kingdom of Christ, as an enemy of that kingdom, he had the chief princes of that kingdom, St. Peter and Paul, executed, as if they were 1) enemies of his temporal kingdom.

132. over such a work and testimony of history Christ stands, and says: "the kings of the Gentiles rule over them, but you do not," that is, do not think that I want to make you worldly lords; let the Gentiles have their rule. Again he says [Matt. 8:20], "The foxes have holes, and the birds have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Now then, where will he lay his hands and feet, and his whole body? Did he lie in the manger and in his mother's womb and arm, even in the ship on a pillow? But this is the opinion: My kingdom is not, on earth to be, to lie, to eat, to drink, to clothe (although the need of the body takes an hour or two, like a guest), but another, which remains there, if such everything ceases. But the fox's hole is his [the fox's] kingdom; when he no longer has that, all his kingdoms are gone, and he with them; for without a hole he cannot remain. But I remain without worldly rule.

I always have to inculcate such a difference between these two kingdoms, and to chew the cud, to drive it in and to wedge it in, even though it is written and said so often that it is annoying. For the wretched devil does not cease to boil and brew these two kingdoms into one another. The worldly lords always want to teach and master Christ in the devil's name, how he should lead his church and spiritual regiment; so the false clergymen and the spirits of the rotten, not in God's name, always want to teach and master how to order the worldly regiment; and so the devil is almost very idle on both sides, and has much to do. May God resist him, amen; if we are worthy of it.

1) In the old editions: would-, is: would they.

(134) Yes, does David also do in this psalm as your interpretation suggests, and mixes spiritual and temporal rule into one another, and wants to have it both ways. Traun, here I should probably have hit myself in the cheeks, and be caught and beaten with my own words; especially when the sharp antilogists would come over this book, who hold me like the eel 1) by the tail, and know how to put on all my disgusting speech. Well then, if the most holy father Pabst with his own will not be merciful to me nor help me out of such distresses, then help me the dear Lord Jesus Christ, whom they are hostile to and persecute. And so say to this: All reason, even a child of seven years, must say that to command and to obey are two different things, just as to rule and to serve are two different things. For the one is called authority, the other we may call inferiority; that is clear enough and also spoken in German. Now we must let God our Lord be the one supremacy over all that is created, and we must all be vain inferior to him (if we do not want to be with love, then we must be with sorrow); then nothing else will come of it (praise to God). For He Himself says Ps. 68, 5, Lord be His name, and the children call Him in faith the Almighty God and Father.

When a preacher therefore says from his office, both to kings and princes and to all the world, Think and fear God, and keep his commandments, he does not mix with worldly authority, but serves and is obedient to the highest authority. Therefore, the whole spiritual government is nothing else but a service to the divine sovereignty. Therefore they are also called God's servants and Christ's servants in the Scriptures; yes, St. Paul also says [Rom. 15, 16.] served the church and all the Gentiles. So also, when David, or a prince, teaches or is called to fear God and to hear his word, he is not a lord of the same word, but a servant and obedient one, and does not mix with spiritual or divine supremacy, but remains a humble servant.

Subordinate and faithful servant. For in the sight of God and in the service of His sovereignty, everything should be equal and mixed, be it spiritual or secular, the pope as well as the emperor, the lord as well as the servant, and there is no distinction here, nor respect of person; one is as good before God as the other. For he is one God, all the same Lord, one as your other. Therefore, they shall all be in the same obedience, and even mingled together, like one kitchen, and all be obedient to help one another. Therefore, in service or subjection to God, there can be no rebellion at all in the spiritual or temporal regime. For out of obedience or service there is no rebellion, as in the world, but out of ruling and wanting to rule.

This means that when the high spirits or wise men want to change and master the worldly law in a territorial and glorious way, they have no command or authority over it, neither from God nor from men. So too, when spiritual or secular princes and lords want to change and master God's word in a territorial and glorious way, even to say what one should teach and preach, this is forbidden to them as well as to the least beggar; that is, they want to be God themselves, not to serve or remain under God's word, but, like Lucifer, to be like God, yes, to be above God, and thus to pull themselves out of under God and into God's authority, and finally to set themselves above him. That is why all the quarrels and complaints are about the amount of spiritual and temporal rule, because of the superiority and not because of the inferiority. For everyone wants to create and make a new thing, but no one wants to serve and obey, both in divine and temporal matters. This is the grievous original sin, inherent plague, ingrown poison from Adam's hereditary stock and paternal blossom, since the devil threw and poisoned him with the word, when he said: "You will be like God. The same damned divinity makes it that everything is mixed into each other.

A secular lord or landlord cannot suffer, and is not to suffer, that his subjects want at the same time.

1) In the Wittenberg and the Jena: "Oel"; in the Erlangen: "Ohel". For our release, compare St. Louiser Ausg., vol. XX, 310, Z10 the form "Oelß" and our note on it.

If a man be servant and master in his house, and what the Lord commanded or forbade them to do or to do, what would become of such a household? But if it is to be right, then one pious servant must say to another: "Dear, you know that our Lord wants this and that and has commanded, therefore let us be obedient, and each do his own. Such a pious servant certainly does not interfere with his master's authority, but serves faithfully, and helps his master to maintain his authority and the servants' obedience, as Joseph did in Egypt against Pharaoh, and David also against his enemy Saul; and all the world must say that such a servant is not a master, but the most submissive and faithful servant. So, when here David mixes himself (as it seems with a great saint) in divine or spiritual regiment, and speaks to his own: You shall do so and so as God has commanded; then he is not a lord, but a faithful servant of his God, whose honor and dominion he seeks submissively.

But if he had said: Dear people, this and that our God has commanded, you know it; but I will not have it so, but command you, as your temporal king and lord, whom you owe to obey, body and soul, that you do otherwise; that might have been called quite well mixed in each other spiritual and temporal, or divine and human regiment. As is done now in our time (praise God and lament!), and as was done before by the noble Antiochus and his like, of which enough has been written for many years. Whoever notices it, let him notice it; whoever does not, let him leave it; God will not suffer such a mixture, as he has never suffered it until now. Well, stop it, it is enough of it.

139) Coming back to David, in his worldly rule, we hear here also in the Psalm many fine princely virtues that he has practiced. For in this piece he does not act as one should serve God (as in the first), but as he has held people to the law, each one against his neighbor. For how the spiritual regiment or office is to direct the people over against God, rightly

The worldly government should govern the people among themselves and ensure that body, property, honor, wife, child, house, yard and all kinds of goods remain in peace and security, and may be blessed on earth. For God wants the government of the world to be a model of true happiness and of His kingdom of heaven, like a show or a masquerade, in which He also lets His great saints run, one better than the other, but David best of all.

(140) Indeed, God subjected and commanded the temporal government to reason, because it is not to govern the salvation of souls nor eternal good, but only bodily and temporal goods, which God subjects to man, Genesis 2:8 ff, for which reason nothing is taught in the Gospel about how it is to be kept and governed, without it saying that one should honor it and not oppose it. Therefore the pagans (as they did) can well say and teach this; and to tell the truth, they are far above the Christians in such matters, as Christ himself says [Luc. 16, 8] that the children of this world are wiser than the children of light; and St. Paul says 1 Cor. 1, 26. f. that not many wise, noble, strong are called, but what is foolish, weak, despised, God has chosen 2c.

Just as we still experience daily how quick, cunning, clever and agile the children of the world are, compared to us pious, silly, good, simple creatures and sheep, so that if God had not stood with us and turned their great wisdom into foolishness, they would have achieved much in another way long before we would have become aware of it. For God is a mild, rich Lord, who casts great gold, silver, riches, dominions, kingdoms among the wicked, as if it were chaff or sand; so he also casts among them high reason, wisdom, languages, oratory, so that his dear Christians are to be regarded as mere children, fools and beggars compared to them.

And what can it say much? The imperial law, according to which the Roman Empire still reigns today and will remain until the last day, is nothing other than pagan wisdom, which the Romans, before Rome was ruled by Christians or by God, had not yet understood.

has himself heard something, have set and ordered. And I think that if all lawyers were baked in one cake and all wise men were made into one drink, they would not only leave things and affairs unconceived, but would also not be able to talk or think about them. For such people have had to practice in great trades, and have learned to know many a man's mind, and have been gifted with great reason and understanding. Summa, they have lived, and will live no more, who have had such wisdom in the worldly government.

On the other hand, one can see what a childish, silly, bad thing ecclesiastical law is, even though many holy, excellent people have been in it, that even the jurists themselves say: *Purus canonista est magnus asinista*. And it must be said, it is the dear truth; for they are very much absorbed in other thoughts, have taken little notice of worldly wisdom.

Therefore, whoever wants to learn and become wise in the secular regime may read the pagan books and writings, which have truly been beautifully and abundantly painted, both with sayings and images, with teachings and examples, from which the old imperial rights also came.

145. and my thought is that God therefore gave and preserved such pagan books as the poets and histories, such as *Homerum*, *Virgilium*, *Demosthenem*, *Ciceronem*, *Livium*, and afterwards the ancient fine jurists (just as he also gave and preserved other temporal goods among the pagans and the ungodly at all times), that the pagans and the ungodly should also have their prophets, apostles and theologians or preachers for worldly rule. Just as St. Paul calls the Cretan poets *Epimenides* their prophets, *Titus 1:12*, and St. Matthew calls the three holy kings *Magos* [*Matt. 2:1*] because they were priests, prophets or teachers of the Arabs. So with them have been *Homer*, *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Cicero*, *Ulpianus 2c.*, as with God's people *Moses*, *Elijah*, *Isaiah 2c.*, and their emperors, kings, princes, as, *Alexander*, *Augustus 2c.* have been their *Davides* and *Salomones*.

146. for like the spiritual and holy prophets and kings the people have

taught and governed people to come to the eternal kingdom of God and to remain in it; so these worldly, pagan, godless prophets and kings taught and governed people to maintain the worldly kingdom. For since God wanted to give temporal rule to the pagans or to reason, he also had to give people who could rule with wisdom and courage, 1) who were inclined and skilled to do so, and who maintained it; just as he always had to give his people true, pure, faithful teachers who could rule his Christian church and fight against the devil. From these two parts all kinds of books, laws and teachings have been made and have remained until now. The pagans, on their side, have their pagan books; we Christians, on our side, the holy scripture books. The former teach virtue, righteousness and wisdom for temporal goods, honor and peace on earth; the latter teach faith and good works for eternal life in the kingdom of heaven.

147 And how could one paint a prince or king on earth more finely, because the pagans have painted their *Herculem*? What more could one desire in a worldly prince, if he were like *Herculem's* deeds, or followed him? True it is, sin or vice run with under; what is the wonder in a heathen, so well also the saints of God, as *David 2c.*, have fallen? But in the regiment they remained fine heroes. What is missing *Alexandra Magno* and his father, *Philippo*? Item, *Augusto*, *Traiano*, and their like, if one should have princely examples to the secular regiment? And, I will be silent about other books now, how could one make one of his books in worldly, pagan wisdom, because the common, silly children's book is called *Aesopus*? Yes, because the children learn it and it is so mean, [it] does not have to be valid; and lets everyone think he is worth four doctors, who has never understood a fable in it.

However, it must be remembered here, as it was also said above [*§ 23 ff.*], that the worldly wise or worldly rulers are not all equal, but as *David* is in his time and in his regiment before other saints of God.

1) Added by us.

a miracle man, as an example to all pious kings and princes; so also here. Although all the heathen are like the heathen, and all have been like men and sensible, yet there must have been some miracle-workers among them, who have done it for and over others in the best way, which the others may not have equaled, but, as much as they were able, they did, and mended the evil fur, as well as they were able, as it still goes and must go. For just as God does not make all His holy people equally prophets or learned, nor equally highly gifted, so also among the Gentiles He has not made the noble stones as common as the pebbles in the street, but has also rarely given them a fine hero, as He still does. For none has yet come to be like Homero or Alexandra, none like Virgilio or Augusto, and so on. [Even among the blind pagans there remains such a miraculous deed of God that it is not their wisdom, but only God's gift, where they have been or done something special.

For this reason, in the Psalm, the good, dear David gives thanks and praise to God for his worldly rule, not to his reason nor to his power. For such high, princely virtue (be it David or Hercules) also belongs to God's activity. The pagans, who could not know where such a difference of princes came from, called it Fortuna, luck, and made a goddess out of it and honored it highly, especially the cleverest, most powerful lords of Rome. The cleverest among them, as Cicero 2c, say that it is a divine inspiration, and conclude that no great man has ever been made by his own powers, but by a special secret inspiration or inspiration of the gods. For they saw how strangely fortunate one man was over another, since one could lead a cause that was not half, not even the seventh part, as skilled with reason, strength and force as many others who should have done better, and yet did not know how to approach, nor how to take counsel or action with all their wisdom; as happened to Demostheni and Ciceroni. This is also what the Germans say in the proverb: He who has luck leads the bride home.

150 And especially must such divine trie

The devil is especially hostile to the Gentiles, his subjects, for the sake of God and His word, as Ezekiel says of Jerusalem. For the devil is especially hostile to them, more than to the Gentiles, his subjects, for the sake of God and His word, as Ezekiel, Cap. 5, 5, says of Jerusalem: "Behold, this is Jerusalem; I have placed her in the midst of the Gentiles." As if he should say: All around she has vain enemies, and the devil himself, for my sake, who do not grant her the little ones with the sows, nor life, let alone a free, good, royal rule in the world. Therefore, God Himself (as the Bible teaches us) has always had to protect and preserve His people's kingdom with His own power and miraculous deeds, through vain miracle workers, whom He chooses and raises up for this purpose. For although the devil is also hostile and abhorrent to the worldly rule of the Gentiles, he hates God's rule on earth much more grievously than the saints, because he has always used the kingdoms and power of the Gentiles, as all the Gentiles around Jerusalem have shown; and he will never let go of it until the last day, when he will have to stop. So David sings of his first virtue in the worldly kingdom:

He who slandereth his neighbor in secret, him will I destroy.

151) Do you hear here that he does not now act against God, but looks among himself and takes care of his neighbor, that is, he also wants to do right by the people, like a secular king. But there are two kinds of slander at court: one that concerns the king or prince himself, as when one speaks evil of him, curses or blasphemes him; as the peasants also use to curse their lords. David (in my opinion) does not speak of this, and the pagans have behaved differently and differently in this matter; each one may take an example of this as he pleases. The magnanimous princes have generally despised it. When the great Alexander was told how evil was spoken of him, he did nothing about it, nor was he angry, but said: *Regium est benefacere, et male audire*, Ei, it is royal when we do well, and the people are evil.

talk about it. As if he should say: Royal virtues are too high for the foolish rabble to understand, and too good to be praised by useless people. He learned this from his prophet Homero, who writes of an unfaithful man, Thersite, who could do nothing else but curse his king. Some Roman emperors have also said: "In the free city of Rome there must be free tongues.

But it was a mortal sin among the people of Israel, as it was among many other nations. For the Jews considered it blasphemy, and even killed the true holy prophets, who by official duty and God's command had to punish both kings and prophets, as we read in all the prophets. But their office did not help them: if they punished the kings' vice and idolatry, it had to be said that they blasphemed God and the king, and were quickly killed. Therefore the saying of Moses, 2 Mos. 22, 28. had to serve: "Thou shalt not curse the gods, nor blaspheme the ruler of thy people." With the saying and the sword of Moses much innocent blood was shed, just as now the name of the church and the authorities must also kill and torment many innocent Christians.

The world is a thistle-head, and when you turn it down, it stretches out its thorns. Before our gospel came, no one knew how to preach from the authorities (as they would be a good state); now that they have been praised and exalted by the gospel, they also want to be over God and his word, and command what is to be preached and believed. Again, if one punishes her, it shall be called sedition. I would also like to say, like that preacher, when he said of the rabbit strip that the head would be evil to strip (but meant the princes and lords): Strip you, he said, the devil. Well, it goes as it should go, without that on the right way nothing wants to remain; it wants to go out either hotte or schwode, as the rumbling and mad 1) nags do.

The other slander goes to the neighbor, as the text says and complains. For David thus clearly confesses that there were such boys at court who tempted him. What else could he say against them so harshly that he would have

not only for a royal virtue, but also for a divine miracle that he was able to eradicate such vices in his court? What is not there, one must not eradicate.

But perhaps he will speak only of his time and of his pants? Now and in our time (God forbid) they are no longer at court, they have all become pious; and if they were, they would not be (whether God wills it); as a fool's spirit says: If I have done it, then, whether God wills it, I have not done it, nor I, nor you, nor my brother, nor my brother-in-law; the shameful nobody has done it, he does all evil deeds, and nevertheless remains free, unpunished before all law and force, and also in all regiment, be it great or small. But reserved, either master Hansen or the devil his right, if God wants to give it into their hands; the same can also (I am very surprised) find the hostile nobody, as Solomon often preaches and warns in his sayings.

The pagans make a good post, and say about a strange god, who is called Momus, who can leave nothing unpunished, therefore his name is also called Momus, that is a reprover. He almost praises what other gods have done to man; but one thing is forgotten and disgracefully done, that there is no window or stove hole made in man's heart, through which one can see what people have in mind and think; 2) and if each one knew how to beware of the other, because it would be painted on his forehead (as we Germans say) what he had in his heart, and no liar, hypocrite, flatterer, nor some false tongue could do anything, much less accomplish anything. But the high reason of wise people hereby complains about the hypocrites and false hearts, and cannot be satisfied nor think what God means by letting us be plagued on earth by false people one below the other; for it thinks, where it would have been present, it would have given God good advice to create man in such a way that he would have to have a window to the heart at the left teat.

1) In the old editions: "kollern und tollern".

2) degenerate - averted, prevented.

For if false tongues were at court and in the regiment, 1) the sword would often remain in the scabbard, since it would otherwise, without need, cause great misfortune, blood and murder; [it] would also certainly not remain so deeply hidden in the books, but would freely come out and rise, like the dear sun, to all who otherwise must suffer injustice. Well, it is the fur, in which neither skin nor hair is good, as all histories testify; without what God does good in it and mends it; that the poor impatient Momus (to speak after the flesh) is not angry without cause, and would gladly that [it] were otherwise. Therefore, David has created this very close, and almost hit the most noble vice and evil at court, as if he had experienced it, that tongues are more harmful than swords and all weapons, be it guns, spears, mice, and how evil it may be called. For where evil tongues were gone, there would be no need for a sword. Therefore also David speaks in the Psalter, Ps. 57, 5: Their tongues are sword and spear. And we Germans say of an evil word that it is an arrow. Item: This is a stab that does not bleed 2c.

What more shall I say of it; it is too high for me, who have not been at court and in the regiment, and am gladly far from it, without thinking that it goes there, as in Christ's kingdom, in which I am a little and quite tried and experienced, and to me, I should say to my Lord Christ, the false tongues do the 2) utmost harm. I have heard two pieces in the secular regiment from people who are now dead, whom I believe, and have seen a piece or two myself. If the others (as I do not know) are also of the same kind or worse, then God help all princes and rulers, and must praise (to speak paganly according to reason) who has gone far away and become a monk or hermit. For I see that in the secular regiment there are also heretics and red spirits, who do not fight and war with the sword (for they are much too timid for that), but with the tongue.

159 Well, I do not want to know more about it, nor can I, because that the Meloschni (that is

1) thäten - Hori odstarent, not hindered. Cf. Col. 668 in this volume.

2) "den" is missing in the Erlanger.

Hebrew), tongue thresher, or (in German) washer, should and must be a fine little cat that can lick in front and scratch behind. He must have the two virtues in him: one, that he can lick well; the other, that he can scratch even better. As David himself paints his Doeg, that he could lick king Saul very well, and speak what pleased him well, and scratch poor David so shamefully, that even thereby over eighty priests were strangled. Such a kitten must have two persons: one who licks it, that is Saul; the other who scratches it, that is David. But at last Saul goes down with his cat, and David remains a master, unscratched, unbitten, and also uneaten. For David says here that they must be destroyed. If he denies it, they will probably find out.

The pagans say of their Hercule (who was their David) that he let himself be fooled by the women at last. One of them put the veil on him, the other one gave him the cam and spindle in her hand, and he had to spin with great love. Well, one must believe that such high princes, like David over Bathsheba, 3) become fools in love with women; but I do not believe that he spun; But I do not believe that he has spun; but the poets and sensible people have painted and improved this with words, that if a female prince or man can otherwise not overcome a tremendous miracle, and if he has overcome all enemies around and around (like Hercules), he still cannot overcome the domestic devil, the native enemy, but the sweet lady and beautiful queen Omphale, with her beautiful face and smooth tongue, puts the veil on the dear Herculi and calls him to spin. There then sits the high victor, who has torn all the lions, captured the infernal dog, slain the Centauros and Lapithas, strangled the dragon, and what more wonders they write of him; there he now sits (I say) and drops his club, takes the spindle in his hand, and his beautiful Omphale threatens him with the rod, where he does not spin right.

161. with it the poets have painted the beautiful kitten, called adulatjo, at court, the

3) In the old editions: Betsab".

trumped the princes and lords on the mouth, and called her to do what she wanted; but with such a beautiful figure and with such sweet speeches that the dear Hercules thinks it is the angel of God, and he himself is not worthy to have such a beautiful lady, as the Omphale is, and becomes her willing, submissive servant; but not without great harm to those whom he should have saved with his club meanwhile, protected and helped against the evil boys.

162) Whether any king or prince has been, or will yet come, who has not been deceived by such a beautiful figure, I do not know, and I will let them take care of it; but I do know from the holy scriptures that the highest king of all kings, David himself, has not remained safe from it. For what his own son Absalom did to him with a beautiful figure and fine words is evident enough. After that, Ziba so finely greased his mouth and tickled his ears in due time that he took from poor Mephibosheth, to whom he had promised some goods before, and gave half of them to Ziba the kitten; Ziba scratched the same from Mephibosheth with his licking of King David. He still boasts here in the psalm that he destroys the slanderers, and at the end of this psalm we will ask him why he can boast about what he has not done or had.

It seems to me that the prophets of the pagans do not want to give any king the honor of having remained undecieved by such a beautiful bride, because they paint the very best prince in paganism, Hercules, as having to spin. As if they should say: What Hercules has not done, you should leave to other princes; what he has not had, you should also suffer; he has had to spin, it will also have to be spun with you. And how can it be otherwise? He who is to rule must trust people, otherwise what would he do in his regiment? But he who trusts is certainly deceived; as the Germans say: Trauwohl rode 1) the horse away. And the Hebrews Ps. 116, 11.: "All men are false." For this is good

I must be sure that no court servant or servant who serves unfaithfully or does harm will speak the worst of himself and disgrace himself. That would be a great fool; but the kitten must clean and adorn itself for the guests we will get. Therefore, this bride must and will remain for a while at court and in all regiments, both high and low.

164 One writes of a margrave of Meissen, 2) who is said to have said: A prince should not be afraid of enemies who are far away from him, but of those who follow him on foot first; for they would rather step on his head. This was a strange man, and he did not want to suffer this bride (as it appears) at his court. But I let him be wise and boast; I nevertheless worry that he will not have cut off the pages of bacon before hell, and will have left the rink at the door. I understand nothing in such things, without thinking that he who has a wicked pelt will not be able to pierce all holes, much less resist all new holes. It remains the same: where there is an unhealthy body, there are also leprosy, pus, and other filth. But the regiment is such a beggar's coat and a child with leprosy, which has smallpox 3) and measles. Therefore, there must be some pious Josephs, Naaman, Nathan, Zadok, 4) who keep it alive and alive, so that it does not perish; the others are pox, sores, Frenchmen, St. Valtin, Anton, 5) (as they paint themselves with such curses now), who make such a body unhealthy, as Ziba, Ahitophel and their like.

But who can speak enough of vice or harm? The pagans have made a lot of books about it, especially Plutarchus. But it is called: Strife the devil. It is an unfathomable evil, so that the world can

2) See K 65 above.

3) Bockeln - smallpox.

4) "Zadok," 1 Kings 1:8. In the old editions: Zadoch.

5) About St. Valentine, the patron of falling sickness, and St. Anthony, the patron "of the holy fire" (the rose, St. Anthony's fire), compare Luther's sermon on the Ten Commandments, St. Louis edition, vol. III, 1159 f. and 1161.

1) "reit" in the old editions is the imperfect.

The kingdom is pestered like a dog with its shillelagh; perhaps so that they do not become too proud and wanton. Nevertheless, David boasts here that he has done his part in this and has paid for it thoroughly. For where a prince should knowingly let himself be milked so shamefully, since he could well resist it, that would be a wicked game, since always vain bells and never a heart 1) would be chosen; there I would certainly lose all my goods, perhaps even be stabbed to death over it. It is too much for a prince to let himself be milked secretly and steal the milk, so that he cannot defend himself. Therefore David must have attacked and angered many a great lord 2) with this virtue. For what glory would it be if he had destroyed a groom or a farmhand? But royal, princely slanderers, who sit not only at court, but also in the countryside, in offices with in: That is David's virtue, and an example of princely courage, especially driven by God; as we have often said.

166 Under this vice one should also understand and comprehend the happy, lovely court jailer, called Neidhart, traitor, and the whole tree, with all its branches and fruits. For David does not want to speak of spiritual or angelic envy, which no worldly king or prince can recognize, judge or punish. That is why he paints and calls envy by its outward fruit, since it can be known, which means to slander. For Envyhart cannot prove his wickedness at court; he must first slander, and then scratch and suppress the innocent, so that it may appear that he is not Envyhart, but a good friend and lover of justice, and that the innocent who is scratched must bear the name, so that justice may be done to him.

167. he must be able to act as if he were sorry, as Sirach says Cap. 12, 15. 16.: "The enemy gives good words, and laments you very much, and acts friendly, and can also cry; but in his heart he thinks

He will fall you into the pit, and if he gets room, he cannot be satisfied with your blood. If someone wants to harm you, he is the first, and poses as if he wants to help you, and falls 4) and overthrows you viciously. Then he shakes his head and laughs in his fist, mocks you and opens his mouth.

Oh, what an abominable text this is! But how certain a truth it is, is shown by many innumerable examples, of which also the heathen books are full; that David attacks this vice as the first and worst, which reigns most violently in the regiments; as one speaks in rhyme: Neidhart, Eigennutz, junger Rath, Jerusalem, Troja, Rom verstöret hat. But for this time enough is said about it for the Psalms; further one may read other books about it; for all heathenism cries out as hard against this house devil as the Scriptures.

Follows the other virtue:

I do not like him who has a proud spirit and high courage.

What has this virtue to send to the court? or, where does such unpleasant vice come to the court, that King David cries out that he cannot stand that someone is proud and arrogant? Yes, where else should such herbs grow, except in the reigns, where there is great power, honor, good and friendship?

Sometimes a beggar is proud and haughty, but no one is afraid of that, but everyone laughs at him and says: "Poor hope, the devil is wiping his ass. And even though it is almost pressing, it can do nothing, because it has nothing in its belly. Aesopus says of this, how the frog puffs itself up and wants to be as big as the ox; but the young frog says, "No, dear mother, if you tear yourself to pieces and burst, you cannot be as big as him. 5)

But David speaks of serious courting, which can do harm, and is common at court; as the mighty, rich, great people can do. And just as he does not speak of spiritual backbiting, or of enviousness, so he does not speak of the

4) "und fället" is missing in the GrhriMk^1

5) The words: "can you long.

in the he

1) "Bells" and "Hearts" here are names of the suits of playing cards.

2) In the editions: "angreifen"; but the Jenaer gives in the Druckfehlerverzeichnis the correction: "angriffeffen".

3) "probably" is missing in the Erlanger.

So here, too, he is not talking about spiritual pride, but worldly pride. For worldly pride is exalted in worldly things here on earth; spiritual pride and envy must be in paradise and among the angels of God, since one wants to be holier than the other, and fall over it into the abyss of hell, and after them follow the false prophets, and all the red spirits in the church and among God's children.

172 In sum, so that we come to the end of the Psalms, pride of place or courtly conduct is not peasant's courtly conduct, in clothes, ornaments, going upstairs, tails, and such lazy things. Although among the princes and lords, nobility and citizens, such things are now also quite predominant, and no one knows how high he would like to be above the others. But this is all purely peasant courtliness, and an example or allegory; for the horses are also proud in this way, and feel their adornment and honor. And if we wanted to call it politely, it is Hansel's courtly conduct, not the prince's courtly conduct, or private and not regimental courtly conduct.

In Greek, however, pride of court and courtly conduct is called tyrannis, in German Wütherich, since a king, prince, or lord could well walk in a gray coat and have no golden, silken, or velvet courtly conduct about him at all, and yet in his regiment plague either his neighbor or his subjects with thumping, defiance, oppression, and all kinds of misfortune, for no other reason than that he has a desire to rage, and would rather be feared than loved. And because there is peace in the country, it may well happen; but if there is war, he must again fear as many tyrants as he has horsemen and lansquenets, and must still give them money. So it all pays off; because he is a tyrant at the time of peace, and takes in money, so at the time of war he must buy vain tyrants for his money about his neck.

174 But David is speaking here of the regimental courtliness against the subjects, and not only boasts that he himself was not courtly against his subjects (which is

1) Wittenberger and Jenaer: "Haus"; both in text and margin. Erlanger: "Hanfes". The sense is the same in both cases.

This is truly a high royal virtue), but he also did not allow his court servants to do so. He has set an example high enough. For to have power, honor, wealth, dominion, and not to want to know it, or not to become proud of it against his subjects, is not the work of common reason nor of bad human nature, but must be the virtue of Hercules or David, inspired by God. Everyone may read such humility of David himself in the books of Samuel; there his humility, as a miraculous deed of God, is painted in a truly fine way, as he shows himself so finely friendly towards his people, even in war, not only in peace.

(175) The secular regiment, like a domestic regiment or marital state, is distinguished in four ways. The 2) first, that they both love each other, husband and wife. The other, that they are enemies to each other. The third, that the man loves his wife, and she is an enemy to him. The fourth, that the woman loves the man, and he is angry with her. Which of these four is best and worst is easy to understand.

176 Thus, where a country stands in such a way that master and servant love each other, and are faithful to each other, they will remain well before their enemies; and if they are not powerful, they can become so; as is written of Solon and the city of Athens. For there humility goes against humility, and they are friendly to each other.

But where prince and country hate each other, as one writes of Sicilia, there a prince becomes a poor schoolmaster, as happened to Dionysio. For there it is hope against hope; as the Latin Historici write of an emperor who said: Oderint,³) dum metuant; grief against grief. What such a regiment does, therefore, many years presents to our eyes with daily examples the noblest, yes, even the most miserable country on earth, Italia.

Thirdly, where the prince loves and the country does not love. Ah, this is our Lord God's own rule! For so he laments in all the prophets, that he loves his bride, and yet she will be a whore. So

2) In the old editions here and in the following cases: "the", because "distinction" is feminine.

3) Erlanger: Oäruut.

Our Lord God must be a cuckold (as they say in Saxony); sed per synecdochen tamen, that is, not all of them; nevertheless, some were also pious virgins in the faith. Many fine emperors at Rome have had such a regiment, some of whom have been innocently strangled; and after the first is the very best. For our Lord God is still able to see to it that when His bride becomes a whore, seven thousand men do not worship Baal and remain a pure virgin. So it must work out in the end that a pious prince remains, and those who are hostile to him perish in the end, and he still finds pious subjects who stand by him. I do not have to give examples here, because the old and foreign ones are not respected, those of our time are not believed.

The fourth [difference], where the Lord is evil and false, and the people are pious and faithful. Ah, this is the praiseworthy regiment which God's children must suffer, who must not only suffer their 1) tyrants, but also pray for them, and grant and do all good. Such a lord was Emperor Julianus; who had now learned that the Christians should suffer injustice; [so] he took away their goods, and mockingly and scornfully said: Your Christ has suffered you hot. In Babylon the Chaldeans also did so (as the 137th Psalm, v. 3., says) to the poor, pious, Jewish captive people: "Dear, sing us a little song of Zion." The papists, especially the bishops, are now using such hope and pride, and are making a mockery of the obedience of their most faithful and pious subjects, and are also calling them to their Christ and Gospel, because they know that their pride is being suffered, and are not moved by God's wrath and vengeance, which has almost recently been enraged against such Julian and Chaldeans.

180 The pagans write (for, as [§ 144] said, in worldly rule their books, sayings, wisdom shall also be accepted), once the wise man Bias was asked, who was one of the wise men in Greece (that is, he was a pagan, worldly-wise prophet): which of the tame animals would be the worst, and which would be the worst of all

among the wild animals? He answered: Among the tame animals, a flatterer is the worst; among the wild ones, a tyrant is the worst. So I would not have answered, but: Among the tame animals are famous for bad worms cats and horses, among the mild ones the wolves and foxes. But they are experienced in regiments, and know how to talk about things. For it teaches 2) one to speak and do need, who otherwise would or could speak and do nothing.

A tyrant wants to be free, like a wild animal, and create what he pleases. A flatterer does not want to be free, but presents himself as the most loyal subject, even imprisoned in service; nor is he above the tyrant with freedom. For the tyrant may be publicly reproached and hated; but the flatterer must be praised and honored. The tyrant does all evil, the flatterer does all good. Therefore meill David is nevertheless also of the mind, that he puts the envious and flatterer in front, as the cunning rogue over all. For also Neidhart sent the devil into paradise, because no worse messenger could be, who would bring Adam and Heva in all misery.

(182) Therefore, dear David (as stated in §174) is an example that a king should not be proud or arrogant or tyrannical for his own person; nor should he allow his court servants to be tyrannical and proud over his subjects. And whoever can do this, let him praise and thank God for it, if he is a Christian or a believing man who knows that such high virtue is God's gift. For it is not enough if he is not proud or tyrannical in his own person, if he allows his servants or officials to deal with his subjects as they please.

He must not trust anyone not to be tyrannical, because David himself and Solomon both complain a lot about it, and it is not to be hoped that the world has become better since then; as Solomon says Ecclesiastes 1:9: "As it was before, so it is still, and there is nothing new under the sun. And in German: Es ist kein Amt so klein, es ist Hängens wert. Divine and right find the offices, both of the princes and officials; but

1) Erlanger: hers.

2) In the old editions: lerM

of the devil are they commonly, who are inside and need [them]. And, if a prince is a wild beast in heaven, then the officials or court servants will also be much more wild beast inside. That is what the evil, corrupt nature does, which cannot bear good days, that is, it cannot use honor, power and dominion divinely; the little office, however small it is, they take a cubit long, since they do not have a hand's breadth, and always want to be God themselves, since they should be God's servant.

For St. Paul, when he praises the authorities highly in Rom. 13, 6, he truly gives them the highest honor by calling them "God's servant". And who would otherwise think so highly of it (from the heart and without constraint), if one did not have to regard her as God's servant? If she herself wants to be God and rule tyrannically with Lucifer, and does not think otherwise than to do everything and anything for the sake of her own benefit, avarice, peace, splendor, then she may also wait for what is written in the Magnificat [Luc. 1, 52]: "He pushes the mighty from their seats, and lifts up the humble. As has happened, and still happens daily, both to high and low rulers, both to princes and to officials. For it is our Lord God's rhyme, which St. Peter writes, 1 Ep. 5, 5: "God resists the proud"; and from the beginning of the world he has been harsh about it, crushing many tyrants who did not want to believe it until they learned it, as Pharaoh, Sanherib 2c. As the heathen also write of their giants, that they fought against the gods, and carried mountains one upon another. And Sirach says [Cap. 40, 10.] that the flood came because of the tyrants; as can be easily understood from Moses [Gen. 6, 4. ff.

Follows the sixth verse in the Psalm, which is the other verse from the worldly regiment:

V. 6 My eyes look for the faithful in the land to dwell with me, and I delight to have godly servants.

(185) My dear David, if you have had and preserved such a choice and such a royalty in your country, you may indeed not only be a true royal prince, but also a royal prince.

be called king. But I am surprised if you have destroyed all slanderers, traitors, envious, proud, tyrants, and all unfit, wicked officials and court servants, and so purely exterminated them, where you have found others in their place, especially, as the text says: faithful and pious. Otherwise, in other kingdoms, and also with us in German lands (at least some of the time), admit it quite evangelically, as Christ says Matth. 12, 43. ff.: When one devil executes, seven worse ones come in his place, and the longer the worse; as the histories or fables say 1) of the widow, who prayed for her tyrant that he would not die soon; and of the beggar, who almost very much scolded the one who shooed the flies out of his wounds. 2) I heard Doctor Staupitz say how Duke Frederick had complained several times that the longer he ruled, the less he could rule, because the people became so strange that he did not know whom he should trust. This was a strange speech for me, who thought that such a great, wise prince's rule would have no offense or challenge. But from my church regiment and from common households of all landlords methinks I now smell such words of understanding from afar; the taste and the grip will be felt by others, namely pious princes and lords (for the others have always more luck neither right), whom God help and be gracious to them. Amen.

186. If David had helped, as he boasts here, he would have taken the whole country before him, opened his eyes, looked around for faithful, pious people, where he could find them, and brought them out, without regard to person; just as God also does, who also distributes his gifts, not according to the appearance of the person, and makes of the shepherd boy David such a great, wise, blessed king, and lets Saul, the king, become a fool, an unhappy and worthless man.

It is true, it should be so, that the personals, who are in reputation, as kings,

1) Instead of this "say," which we have taken from the old edition, the editions bring: "say" after the words, "shooed out of the wounds."

2) The widow asked for her tyrant, so that a worse one would not come; the beggar scolded, because now worse, hungry flies would come.

Princes, lords, Abel, high and low, should also be wise and pious according to their status; for they therefore have a high, noble title, shield and helmet before others, and have the power, goods and honor of the world, so that they alone should rule justly; but there is a lack of the own mind of our Lord God, who holds us all equal to one dough, one like the other, and does with us as he wills. Therefore he often gives wisdom and virtue to a nobleman, which he does not give to three princes, and to a commoner, which he does not give to six noblemen. For he does not want to be subject to the human creature (as St. Peter calls it), free and unbound, as a true God, even if it is beautiful and fine. For who would not wish that, the higher state after birth, the higher wisdom and virtue would be there. But it cannot and will not always be so; that is our Lord God's fault, not ours; [he] could make it so, if he wanted to; we cannot make it so, as almost we would like to and would do it; for it is said in Ps. 100, 3: "He makes us; and we ourselves do not make us."

It is said of Emperor Maximilian that his masters at court were annoyed when he used his scribe or priest (as they say) for such honest and imperial dealings, messages, and rhetoric. But again he complained: he must use what he could, because they would not do it, nor let themselves be used 2c. Yes, they wanted to have the honor, dignity, power and height of the court, but they did not want to touch the court's labor and work. To deal with letters, writing and reading in the chancellery is clerical; to work in trades, council and embassies is servile, and not peasant work, but also donkey work: yes, a court cannot do without such court donkeys, let it be done by the prince himself, or whoever does it for him. The regiments do not want to lie on the cushion and rest, or sit behind the stove like a lazy, sleepy dog; they want to have worked. Therefore, necessity forced Maximilian to do as David had done and to look around the country for people who could work diligently and faithfully and support his regiment, be they nobles, clerks, priests, or whatever.

For it is good to be a court horse and a court mule; but to be a court mule is toil and labor, unpleasure and weariness; nevertheless, if a court mule did, 1) then a court horse and a court mule would not eat, drink, walk idly and play so superfluously.

It may well be that Maximilian saw how they were not only unwilling but also unskilled. For because the nobility at court and elsewhere corrupts itself from youth with indulgence, gambling, proclamation of buildings, and grows untrained, unbroken, inexperienced in its own will, that it does not become much more skillful men, especially in the wine countries. For, as St. Paul says, that from indulgence become wild, savage, rough, careless, ill-tempered men, who then can not be right in any matter, but with the head and throbbing they want to go through, just as if regiment were such an easy thing, as indulgence is, and should well make good things evil, and evil things much before make worse than better. I have often seen my sorrow, what fine, well-groomed bodies and souls there are among the young nobility, 2) like the beautiful young trees, and because there was no gardener to pull them up and keep them, they are chewed up by pigs, and abandoned and withered in their sap. They say themselves: Farm life sow life. But it is always a pity that such fine people should be trampled under such sows; nevertheless, it harms the whole regime, both lands and people, where the youth is corrupted.

But every country must have its own devil, Welschland its, France its; our German devil will be a good wineskin, and must be called Sauf, because it is so thirsty and holy, which cannot be cooled with such great drinking of wine and beer. And such eternal thirst, and Germany's plague will remain (I worry) until the last day. Preachers have increased with God's word, rulers with prohibition, the nobility some even among themselves with obligation; they have resisted, and resist

1) Here "thäte" stands for: not there **WÄe**.

2) Erlanger: is.

We are still confronted daily with great, horrible damage, disgrace, murder and all the misfortunes that happen to body and soul, which should deter us. But drunkenness remains an almighty idol among us Germans, and does like the sea and the dropsy; the sea does not become full of so many waters that flow into it, the dropsy becomes thirstier and worse from drinking. Sirach says [Cap. 31, 34, 40, 20.] that wine was created (as also the 104th Psalm, v. 15, says), that a man may be glad of it and strengthen life; so drunkenness makes us mad and foolish with it, gives us death and all kinds of pestilence and sin with it. Now, there is neither time nor space here to speak of the sour god Sauf; he does indeed pay his faithful servants in the end, so that they feel it.

191 Again, to David, who wants to be a king of kings, to take from among his people those who are able or not. This was the way and the right of the people of Israel, just as they did with wives, and a king often took a citizen's daughter. The Turk also has such a choice and a kingdom in his kingdom. But whether a king or prince should do it now, I will not and cannot advise; unless emperors, kings and princes would do it with the whole empire. Before that happens, we want to see the supreme Lord of all lords coming up in the clouds and going away with him. However, the regiment, the evil fur, may remain a plump regiment, and let God command (the personnel unmixed) whichever one he wants to bring forth and raise up. Just as I would not have the imperial rights mixed or changed, although both lords, subjects, judges and jurists not only live contrary to them, but also confidently abuse them. For the pagans also say that the change of regiments and rights is not possible without great bloodshed; as all histories testify; and before a new way of the empire was established in the German land, it would be devastated three times.

For this reason, I do not take kindly to Master Klügling, who masters secular law, or to all those who want to do better. Although it sometimes seems to me that the regiment and jurists may well also be of a Lutheran opinion.

should. But I worry that they would get a coiner. For God does not esteem the temporal regiment as great as His own eternal regiment, the church regiment; therefore I cannot hope nor do I want that they will get a Luther. Since there is no other regiment to be hoped for in the Roman Empire than the one indicated by Daniel [Cap. 2, 29. ff.], it is not advisable to change it, but to mend and repair it, whoever can, because we are alive, punish the abuse and put plasters and Swedes¹⁾ on the patches. But if the patches are plucked out with ruthlessness, then no one will feel the pain and damage but such clever balancers who would rather pluck out the sore than heal it. Well then, Germany is perhaps ripe, and I worry, worthy of a strong punishment; God be merciful to us. I know well that I (praise God!) am not minty; whoever can do better, to him I would gladly put my poor Pater noster from the bottom of my heart, if only I could also put the Amen. For I have said it many times (but who would believe me until it was known?): The changing and the improving are two different things; one is in the hands of man and God's decree, the other is in God's hands and grace.

V. 7. I do not keep false people in my house; liars do not prosper with me.

193 It is a common complaint in all classes and lives about false, lying people, as one says: There is neither faith nor belief anymore. Item: Good words, nothing behind them, and what is called white is black. The ancient Romans almost blamed such vices on the Greeks, as Cicero himself says: "I grant the Greeks that they are learned, wise, skillful, eloquent people, but faithfulness and belief are not respected by the people. And before Cicero, Plautus says in one person: "Dear fellow, I may not pay for water, air, earth, heaven; but what else I should have in the house, I must buy in Greek good faith, that is, I must pay for it in cash.

1) "Sweden" (ointment?) is written in the sermon on Joh. 16 "Schwelen". Cf. St. Louis ed. vol. VIII, 653, § 95 and the note to it.

Well, such an unfaithful, false people has now long since suffered its punishment from the Turk, who also paid it in cash. Welschland has also learned that they can promise and swear whatever they want, and then mock if they have to keep it. Therefore they have their plague honestly, and both Greeks and Whales must be examples of the other commandment of God, since he says that he shall not go unpunished who abuses God's name.

No virtue has so highly praised us Germans, and (as I believe) so highly exalted and preserved us until now, than that we have been considered faithful, true, steady people, who have let Yes be Yes, No be No, as many histories and books are witnesses to. And I do not know much about court justice; but nevertheless I have experienced how Duke Frederick was so strangely hostile to liars, and I myself once heard from his brother H[erzog] Hans that he said: "Well, this one told me this, that one tells me this; someone must be lying. I know this for a fact, that it made me laugh, such pious princes seriousness and anger about the lies. So have been many other princes before. We Germans still have a little spark (may God resound and blow it out) of the same virtue, namely that we are nevertheless a little ashamed, and do not like to be called liars, do not laugh at it, like the whales and Greeks, or make a joke of it. And even though the Welsh and Greek naughtiness is disappearing, God have mercy on us, there is nevertheless still the fact that no one can speak or hear a serious, horrible word of shame, for if he is called or scolded as "a liar".

(196) And it seems to me that there is no more harmful vice on earth than lying and unfaithfulness, which divides all the fellowship of men. For lying and unfaithfulness first divide the hearts; when the hearts are divided, the hands also depart from one another; when the hands are divided, what can one do or create? If merchants do not keep faith with one another, the market falls to ruin. If husband and wife are not faithful to each other, she runs out behind, the husband runs out in front, and

goes, as the latter says: "Fend off, dear elf, fend off that we do not become rich; you break jars, I break pots. If a mayor, prince, king does not keep faithful company, the city must perish, the country and its people perish. 1) The people of the city must be protected. That is why there is such shameful division, discord [and] misfortune in the French country. For where loyalty and faith cease, there must also be an end to the reign. Christ help us Germans.

197 If there is such vice at court or in offices, as David confesses here, then it must also follow. For whether peasants and citizens cheat, lie, deceive and insult each other is not yet the worst devil, because they are not in the regiment; but when it comes to the high people, so harming the country and the people, that is the Beelzebub. As Pope Julius [II] and later Clement [VII] did against the emperors (as the popes have done much); and when princes do the same against each other, and finally officials or court servants also against the subjects, there are many promises, promises, promises, oaths and oaths that crack the beams, and everything is vain friend and brother.

Pope Julius also had the Sacrament divided into three parts and made an eternal alliance with the Emperor Maximilian and the King of France; just as God the Father, Son, Holy Spirit is One God, so such unity should also be firm. But soon after the letter was sealed with dirt. For the Most Holy Father was at odds with the Son and the Spirit. It is said of a Swiss that he had often been present when one had acted in some matters, had promised and sworn hard, and yet had kept nothing: I wanted (he said) that we should swear once that we would not keep any more oaths, so that it would have an end.

Well, it is evil (says Solomon) when the old lie, that is, the high, honest, mighty rulers. One praises the Turks that they keep faith and loyalty (this will perhaps make them so powerful). If it is true, so be it. But it is certainly true that if so many people hold loyalty and

1) "the" is missing in the Erlanger.

If David had kept the faith, or if he had been as truthful and constant as they would have liked others to be, he would not have had so much to do with false, unfaithful people and liars in his court. It is a wonder that in such a holy nation, under such a pious, holy king, there were also false men and liars. For if he had not had them among him, why should he boast so highly of his royal virtue in this? Such toil and labor has come to him because of faithful, pious servants. If then his court, the court of such an excellent king, has stood thus, then we heathens, too, may not any king or prince esteem his court much better, nor more sacred, and let this psalm be painted on the walls.

The eighth and last verse:

V. 8. Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all evildoers from the city of the LORD.

200 That is, I cannot tell all the vices; but this is the sum of them, I suffer none. For he has told some, as St. Paul tells Gal. 5:19 ff. of the works of the flesh, saying, "These and such shall not possess the kingdom of God." So David also counts several pieces here: Transgressors, wicked, perverse slanderers, proud, hopeful tyrants, false liars; then says, Summa, all, all, all ungodly 2c., all transgressors I cut off, that is, I suffer neither ungodly in spiritual government, nor transgressors in worldly. For he would also have told of avarice, usury, thievery, robbery, drudgery, murder, indulgence, fornication and the like, which are also not strange among the nobles. And who has ever done it, or could still do it, that he should write out all wickedness from piece to piece in a book, let alone in a psalm? as it is well seen, even in our time (let alone the old), that one always, in order to control such vices, makes one law another, one right another, one order another, one way over another, and there is (as Solomon rightly says) no end to bookmaking [Eccl. 12:12]. Books he does not call paper and ink, but doctrine and order, which are always

new over new in the world, and yet hardly resists or controls.

(201) Is it not grievous in David that he reproaches us all on earth so shamefully and publicly, and sings in all the churches? he saith sheer evil of all classes: Kings are not pious, princes are not pious, lords and nobles are not pious, citizens are not pious, preachers, prophets are not pious. For this is how he deals with all of us through this psalm, and leaves no one without good; therefore he speaks ardently that he must purge and exterminate evil teachers and false rulers. There are still some pious kings, princes, lords, citizens, peasants, servants, maidservants, preachers and pastors who have to stay; or they want to take David with us, where he will go, because he himself is also a king and prophet. But our Lord God's counsel is the best, that he intend to thrust heaven and earth into one heap, and make another new world. For this world is not fit, there are too many boys in it and too few pious people, it will not and cannot go anywhere; just as the Lord's Prayer teaches us. For if it were right and possible on earth, there would have been no need to pray: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done. For the high and wise kings and princes could have done it out of their power, if it had been possible for nature, for they really tried it to the utmost.

If a prophet or preacher wrote so vehemently of or against false teachers and evil rulers, he should be scolded and condemned seditiously. But now he is a king and does this himself; he would like to have spared the honors, and at least to have eaten and bitten into himself some pieces, as no doubt many a king and prince has done, and perhaps still does. For just as women do not like to be called whores (even though they are in fact whores), so kings and lords do not like to hear courtiers scold them and punish them as the unjust and wicked, because this seems too close to honor. But David goes out and does not mince words, makes it coarse and unreasonable enough, and does not want to bite anything,

boasts that 1) it was very well done that he so shamefully scolded his own at court and also destroyed them. If it has turned out well for him, and he will not be taken for a nonsensical fool, like all the other prophets, by his fellow clowns, then it is a miracle to me, and he will have experienced it well.

Of course, at that time Ahitophel, Joab, Abisai, and other of his princes and court officers or officials did not want to do wrong, but all of them considered their actions to be praiseworthy and honest, as has happened and still happens in other kingdoms and among us Germans; no one does wrong, everyone does right. As I myself once heard from a great Hansen, no man has ever been an enemy of the Gospel on earth. Therefore, David must not only have been a bold hero with his fist, but also a free man with his tongue. It will certainly be the real David who tore the bear, strangled the lion, and slew Goliath; imitate him.

204 He also reputedly performs such miraculous deeds early. Such "early" here means not of the day, but of the regiment's early hour, that is, he has eradicated such vices soon and in lines, before they have come into their heat at half or full midday. For where a vice is allowed to break down and become a habit, there is no counsel; as Seneca says: *Deest remedii locus, ubi, quae vitia fuerunt, mores fiunt*, when vices become a habit, it is done; and the poet Ovidius very finely says: *Principiis obsta, ward off the evil when it begins; for where it gets out of hand, help comes too slowly*. But the best in the game is provided (they say), and a David belongs to it, who is so brave and sharp; yes, he must be especially enlightened, so that he notices the early hour, and recognizes the beginning of the vice, and quickly eats the eggs of the Un[ge]ziefers in the nest, before the noon sun makes caterpillars out of them. Otherwise, where they oversleep the early hour, their troubles become too thick and too great before they realize that they are

(as if their hands were tied) cannot help.

205 They say, "The tree should be bent because it is young; when it grows old, it wants to be unbent, or it breaks. Tell me, who wants to control usury and drunkenness in German lands now? If idolatry had been resisted in the papacy, the gospel would have remained pure. Now, also the French virtues are taking hold in Germany (especially in the regiments). Nobody sees it, nobody fights it. After that, when we no longer want to suffer it, and would like to have it controlled, the caterpillars will sit in all the leaves, and will be said to have slept too long. My dear Doctor Staupitz used to say: When God wants to punish someone, he first makes him blind, so that he does not have to see where his danger and harm begin; as it is also written in the Gospel Matth. 13, 25: "When the people closed their eyes (and that means to keep their eyes shut and not to see or notice), the enemy came. When the weeds grew large, the damage was first seen in their sleep; and when they wanted to pull it out, they did so: Too long 3) (said Christ, v. 29.), "ye also would pluck up the wheat; let it grow until the harvest." Therefore, truly, my little David must not have been a little peeler (as they say), who may have known great peelers so soon. How mistrustful a king he must have been; how carefully he must have considered all the words and works of his servants; and yet he remained a gracious, humble, kind, comforting lord.

(206) Dear one, let us here at the end take to task the glorious king, who may boast so gloriously of his reign, as if no water had ever been distressed in his time. First of all, look how miserable and poorly his kingdom began, since he had to be insecure under Saul for so long; and after Saul's death, oh how he mended himself before he was confirmed as king. After that he himself fell into adultery and great sin against God, from which, as a punishment, his son Amnon

3) So it says in the original and in the old editions. Walch has changed this and shredded for it: but too late. This has reprinted the Erlanger.

1) Instead of "as" one would expect: that it. Perhaps "than" is a misprint for "that", which is: that. The "it" often fills in after "that".

2) Erlanger: yours.

Weakened his own sister Tamar, and was therefore also strangled by his brother Absalom [2 Sam. 13, 1. ff.]. The same Absalom then drove out David, his father, and defiled all his wives, and was 1) after his merit dreadfully stabbed, 2 Sam. 5 and Cap. 16. Joab, his field captain, treacherously stabbed two of the best princes and councilors, 2 Sam. 20, 8. ff. Ahithophel, his secretary, and all Israel fell from him and sat against him. Last also the rebellion [of Seba, the son of] 2) Bichri, 3) afflicted him severely; I let alone the pestilence, since God punished his sin with, 2 Sam. 24, 15. Who knows what more misfortune he suffered that is not written? Dear David, come now and boast to us of your beautiful rule, and praise God for it. Is not the unfortunate Herod's regiment much worse to look at, or that of the pagans in Greece; what shall we say to this? I advise that it be ordered to the sharp lords in the papacy, who can unite everything they teach against themselves in their laws; hence they call their book *concordantia discordantiarum*. Truly, rightly baptized and named.

(207) Now, I will leave David here, and consider (as there is no doubt) that he must not rely on my or any man's counsel and help in such distress, because he has such a gracious God, who holds him so gloriously and high, that he boasts of him everywhere that David is his faithful servant, who has done all his will, and in addition [Christ] 4) was born of his seed, and was not ashamed nor despised to become such a king's son. Now what harm is it that we believe (so that we do not call God a liar) that his rule is the kingdom of God?

the highest, the best, the dearest in the sight of God, even though before us men (who will not judge more harshly than God Himself) it can be seen in the most shameful way? But if I wanted to do so, I could quite well tolerate such contradictory things, and recently say: David's regiment has gone as he boasts here; but that he has encountered many misfortunes, that he has had to suffer, precisely because he has ruled them well and seriously. But if he also sinned, he did not defend the sin, like Saul and other kings more, but also stopped and desisted. For whoever wants to rule or should rule, he will have to have the devil for a godfather. Thus it is also said above [§ 20] that a king or prince cannot punish secret evil deeds until God reveals them; it is enough that he does not punish revealed or otherwise public vices. 5)

208 Here I will conclude it, I hope I have done it well. I call it good, where it will please few people and annoy many people. This is almost as sure a sign as the manger and swaddling clothes were sure signs to the shepherds. But if it pleases everyone, then it is certainly an evil, shameful work that I have done, but I hope that I have behaved well. But if it pleases everyone (since God is for it), then it is a lost work in the name of God, and no one is served by it. But, whoever lets it be known that [it] does not please him, he will certainly feel hit and know himself guilty, and just with that confess that he is or would like to be one of those whom David paints here; as Christ says [Matth. 12, 37.]: "Out of your mouth you will be condemned." And the heathen, as Cicero, also say, If no man be called so to punish vice, he that is angry about it betrayeth and giveth himself to be guilty. Christ our Lord be merciful to us all, and remain (in strong faith) our dear Savior, Amen.

1) In the issues: will.

2) Added by us.

3) 2 Sani. 20, I. The original edition offers "Bichri". This has been changed by the Wittenberg, the Jena and the Erlangen (not well, we think) into "Sichri".

4) Added by us.

5) Erlanger: let.

24. first interpretation of the 110th Psalm.*)

Anno 1518.

[Georg Spalatin's letter.]

Georgius Spalatinus wishes salvation and bliss to the honorable and wise gentleman, Hieronymus Ebner, Losunger 1) at Nuremberg.

Favorable Lord! The holy father, bishop and teacher, St. Augustine, in the preface to his interpretation of the holy book of Psalms, writes of their manifold praise thus: "The Psalm is a rest for souls, an ensign of peace, which tames the restlessness and turbulence of thought, subdues anger, dispels excess, instills moderation, gathers friendship, brings the quarrelsomeness to harmony, reconciles enemies with each other again, brings the

The Psalm is a joining together and a uniting through the voices that unite the different peoples of a congregation in harmony. The psalm is a gathering and a uniting through the unison of voices, which unites the different peoples of an assembly through the unity of the same sound. The psalm chases away the devils and arouses the angels to help. The psalm is a shield in the night terrors, a rest of the daily work, a protection of the children, an adornment 2) of the young men, a comfort of the old men, and the most comfortable ornament of the women. The Psalm makes the desolate places inhabited and teaches moderation. It will be a beginning for those who are beginning, and an encouragement for those who are increasing.

1) "Losunger" will probably be as much as second mayor, oenn Scheurl calls him (Briefbuch II, p. 24 and 36) ftuunaviruun and: nostruS reiputMous 86euncInS moderator.

2) In the original: "am zierhait".

*) The Nuremberg jurist D. Christoph Scheurl repeatedly expressed his wish to Luther (Sept. 30 and Nvv. 3, 1517. Scheurl, Briefbuch, Vol. II, p. 24 and p. 36) that Luther might ascribe "something Christian" to Hieronymus Ebner, a very learned and holy man who loved Christ and enjoyed Luther's writings, "which would bring happiness to the soul. Luther responded to this request with the present writing and sent it to Spalatin, who, as we can see from his letter to Ebner (dated Augsburg, August 22, 1518), was in Augsburg at the time and had it printed there (not in Leipzig, as the Erlanger says). The first edition appeared under the title: "Auslegung des hundert vnd neündten Psalmen. Dixit dominus domino meo, Doctor Martini luther Augustiner zu Wittenberg, zu Herr Hieronymus Ebner Lofunger zu Nürnberg." At the end: "Gedruckt vnd seliglich vollendt zu Augspurg durch Siluanum Otmar, am abent unser lieben frauen geburt s7. Sept. 1. Anno Fünffzehnhundert vnd im achtzehenden jare." In 1518, Otmar published a second edition and a reprint by Melchior Lotther in Leipzig. In 1519, the same was done by Melchior Lotther, and by Martin Landsberg in Leipzig; in 1520, in Wittenberg by Johann Grünenberg, and in Augsburg by Jörgen Nadler. In the collective editions: in the Wittenberg (1556), vol. VIII, p. 573; in the Jena (1564), vol. I, p. 89; in the Altenburg, vol. I, p. 101; in the Leipzig, vol. VI, p. 392; in the Erlangen, vol. 40, p. I and in the Weimar, vol. I, p. 687. After the latter we give the text. - In the last decade, the Lutheran pastor E. A. Doleschall in Budapest discovered in the General Archives of the Lutheran Church in Hungary Luther's own handwritten transcription of the interpretation of the 110th Psalm, consisting of a booklet of 15 quarto leaves the size of our ordinary writing paper. The first page of the manuscript is entitled: "Das dixit dno meo Der oviuiii. Psalm. Zcu deuthsch vund außgelegt Nach der hebreischen Lectur: wilcher vaßt gemeynn ist aber eyn Schoner gesang von Christo." On the back of the first sheet is the Latin translation of the psalm with the superscription: 109. cto rosno 6t saoorckotio Odristi. Then follows on sheet 2 the German psalm and the text of the psalm. In 1887, Doleschall published this manuscript in Budapest under the title: "Eine aufgefundene LutherReliquie" ("A Found Luther Relic"), but this imprint seems to have become little known. Now this manuscript of Luther has been published in the Weimar edition, vol. IX, p. 176ff. in a completely faithful imprint with retention of the abbreviations and punctuation. The manuscript is not the print manuscript, but a concept. The main difference between the print, on which all others are based, and the manuscript is that in the latter, all of the verse summaries are missing. In detail, one finds, in addition to many, but not significant deviations, also a rather large number of corrupted passages, which, as it seems, have crept in during printing. We have used the manuscript to improve these passages, but refrain from printing the same, because in our edition the archaeological interest takes a back seat. We do not share the doubts about the authenticity of the Summaries suggested by P. Pietsch, but we are of the opinion that either Spalatin or the Augsburg printer put "priesthood" instead of "priesthood" twice, which, of course, contradicts the definition given by Luther (Z 44 z. E.).

It is the increase, the constant fortification of the perfect, and the voice of the whole church. The psalm adorns the joyfulness, and relieves the sadness, which is for the sake of God. The psalm also moves the ears from a stony heart. The psalm is a work of the angels, an exercise of the celestials, and a spiritually fragrant smoke. Also, there is nothing that is not learned from the Psalms. For 1) From them is learned all the greatness of virtue, all the manner of righteousness, all the adornment of chastity, all the perfection of prudence, and the rule of patience. From it comes all that may be called good, and especially the perfect art of God, the prophecy of the incarnation of Christ, the hope of the common resurrection, the fear of chastisement, the promise of glory, the revelation of the secret meaning. And all goods are hidden in the Psalms as in a great and common treasure, deposited and heaped together. For this reason, the first and foremost teachers of the Holy Scriptures, who were much holier in the past, took so much care, so much trouble

1) In the original: "when".

and work on the Psalms, as St. Gregory, St. Athanasius, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Hilarius, Cassiodorus and others. And in our days the worthy, highly learned father, Doctor Martinus Luther, Augustinian at Wittenberg, who has explained to you (as a special lover of all Scripture, and especially of the holy) in honor and favor the following hundred and tenth 2) Psalm with a German interpretation. Which I have ordered to be printed here, in the hope that it will be enough for many people to improve their erroneous nature and conduct, and move them to ascribe to God alone the glory, and to themselves all infirmity. So that I have faithfully commanded myself into your favor and good opinion. Date at Augsburg, on Sunday, the eighth of the Assumption of the Blessed Mother of God and the Eternal Virgin Mary, 3) after the birth of Christ our Savior, one thousand five hundred and in the eighteenth year.

2) In the original: "neünden".

3) That is, on Sunday, which is the Octave of the Assumption of Mary. Assumption is August 15, therefore the date of this writing is August 22, 1518.

The hundred and tenth Psalm*)

of the kingdom and priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, prophesied and described by King David.

1. 4) God said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand,
002 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.
3. the scepter of your power will be given to god.

4) In this interpretation, we could not (as we usually do) keep the verse count of the Bible, but were forced to keep the order that Luther himself followed here, because after the headings "The first verse" 2c. he first gives a summary of the verse before he brings the text itself, but nowhere gives the whole verse, but only the parts of a verse one after the other.

Send from Sion, your dominion shall be in the midst of your enemies.

4. thy peoples shall be the volunteers in the day of thy power, in holy adornment; out of the mother of the dawn shall be born unto thee the dew of thy childbearing.

5 God has sworn, and will never repent, that you will be a priest forever, after the manner of Melchizedech.

6 The LORD at thy right hand hath broken the kings in the day of his wrath.

*) In the original: "Der hunderst und neünd Psalm", according to the Vulgate. Between Spalatin's inscription and this superscription, the original text of the psalm is printed in Latin according to the wording of the Vulgate with the superscription: ksalinus 6IX. cke re^no et kaeerckotio Okristi. Only the fourth (according to the Bible the third) verse Luther has given in his own translation so: kopuli tut spontunei in ckis virtutis tnse in clevre kuncto: ex matriee surorne tidi rc" pueritiae tuae, which in the Vulgate reads: Deourn prinoipiurn in <1ie virtutis tun" in splenckoridus kunetorum: ex utero ante Ineikernrn Zenui te.

7. he will be a judge in the kingdom of the Gentiles, he will fulfill what has fallen apart, he will crush the heads that rule over many people's land.

8 He shall drink of the river of water in his departure, therefore he shall lift up his head.

The entrance? 1)

1) This Psalm is frightening to tyrants, ambitious overlords and prelates, who rise high without being called by God; but comforting to those who are oppressed and suffer violence. For 2) the tyrants follow after the devil, who always wants to ascend high from the beginning of the world. Therefore this psalm calls kings and chiefs the enemies of Christ, and bids them be broken. And finally the opinion is, that all the proud and mighty shall be brought low, and the humble and fallen shall be lifted up; so that all authority shall be given to Christ alone after mankind, and he alone shall reign; therefore he immediately raises up against the ambitious rulers.

The first verse.

This verse avoids the throne and kingdom of Christ, and gives this teaching and instruction that no one should give glory to Himself, but follow the Lord Christ, who has received the rule, the equality of God and the very best spiritual goods not from Himself, but by the command of God the Father.

God said to my Lord,

JEsu Christo [Hebr. 5, 5]. As if one should speak: My Lord Jesus Christ has not exalted Himself to be my Lord, as the arrogant and ambitious do, but by the commandment and requirement of God the Father.

3 Therefore beware, all of you who have exalted yourselves. The head and the spirit are for you.

4) Isaiah writes [Cap. 2, 11]: Et curvabitur omnis sublimitas hominum, et humiliabitur altitudo virorum, all the height of the rulers will be bowed down, and all the supremacy of the prelates will be pressed down or laid low, and only the Lord will be exalted. Therefore, God says:

Sit down.

That is, you alone be the Lord; the king's seat and buttocks shall be yours and not another's. For the little word "sit down" expresses a kingdom. For thronus or sedes means a chair. Hence comes: Sede, königstuhl dich, be a king, sit on the king's chair.

To my right.

That is, to reign beside me, so far and away as myself, over all creatures in heaven and on earth; according to the words of the 8th Psalm, v. 7: "Thou hast set him over all thy hands' work and creatures, and hast subjected all things unto his feet."

4) And further, that he saith not, To my head, or to my left, he expresseth, first, that Christ is not equal with God after mankind, but is under God, though he be the Lord and head of all things, and none but God's subject, so that the holy apostle interpreteth and saith [1 Cor. 15:27.], "He that put all things under him hath put nothing out; without doubt he alone, 5) that put all things under him."

(5) Secondly, by the rights of God it is understood that the kingdom of the Lord Christ is a spiritual, hidden kingdom. For the visible and corporeal kingdoms or goods are called the left hand of God, though they are all subject to Christ; but his kingdom is not in them, but the kingdom of men in time is in them, yet subject to Christ.

The other verse.

(6) This other verse says full of the power and strife of Christ, and that no man shall avenge himself, but shall deliver up vengeance unto God.

4) In the manuscript: "als dann"; in print: "thus that".

5) So the handwriting. Print: alone, because the.

1) In Luther's handwriting: "Interpretation".

2) In print, "when," and likewise throughout the interpretation; therefore, we do not note this further. In Luther's manuscript, however, we find: "then".

3) In the original: "of all", because "violence" is both masculine and feminine.

give. For God will subdue His children's enemies to all creatures forever with weakness.

Until I kill your enemies.

This is again spoken against the tyrants, who not only raise themselves up, but also subjugate their opponents and counterparts by their own power. But Christ, just as he does not exalt himself, so he does not oppress those who oppose him in this exaltation, but God the Father, who exalts him, also oppresses his enemies. In this we are clearly instructed, if Christ does not avenge Himself, 1) how much more should we not avenge ourselves on our enemies, but give this home to God, who says: "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" [Deut. 32, 35. Rom. 12, 19.]. And now here: "Until I lay your enemies"; not you, but I will lay your enemies. Great comfort is this. 2)

7. you have enemies, but keep silent, I will act for you. Suffer thou, let me avenge. When he speaks through Moses [Ex. 23, 22.], "I will and will be an enemy to your enemies." O blind people! who impatiently seek revenge themselves, and do not hear that God speaks: "I will be your enemies" 2c. As if he said: "I am more moved by your enemies than that they should be my enemies. So nearly do I take hold of thee: "He that toucheth thee toucheth the apple of mine eye" [Zech. 2:8]. Therefore he saith not, Till thou put away thine enemies; neither, Till I put away mine enemies; but, Till I put away thine enemies; 2c. diligently warning us to be patient, and to return vengeance unto him, and to know his fatherly kindness toward us, and diligent care.

(8) Now the enemies of Christ are all tyrants, all who offer themselves for authority, unappointed by God, and all who do not want to be subject to Him, for God sets Him above all things. Therefore, those who are not obedient to him are disobedient to God, whose will they resist. And so Christ sits and reigns after mankind until the last day;

Until the same God puts down His enemies without ceasing; but then Christ will hand over His regiment to the Father [1 Cor. 15, 28.], and God Himself will reign eternally, and will be in every one of all things. This is nothing different, according to St. Augustine's interpretation, because Christ now reigns after mankind in faith; but then faith will cease, and God Himself will be revealed, in which contemplation blessedness will last forever.

9) In the meantime, the enemies of Christ must be suppressed, and he must contend with them always, and overcome, that is, 3) the Jews, heretics, pagans, and evil Christians, even evil desires in man, all of whom must succumb; some in good, who humbly amend with lightning, some with evil, who hopefully harden and harden themselves.

To the footstool of your feet.

10 This is said according to the proverb, where a despised man is called a footstool. So shall all the proud and mighty be rejected of all creatures that are Christ's subjects. Although they are alive and mighty, and act against Christ and his own, and appear to be so great in the sight of men, and sit as heads, and pervade all things righteously and mightily, and walk freely and securely, yet it is a fearful thing to be a footstool of Christ. For in like manner as a man, 4) being in disgrace before one lord, hath no grace in any thing that is of the same lord, yet hath refuge in another lord; but Christ is a Lord over all things, so that there is nowhere to 5) flee before him; and all things are his, that is, all creatures shall chastise, curse, and be ungracious to his enemies and adversaries;

3) "is" is missing in print.

4) It seems to us that the text here is deficient. We would expect something like the following: "For it is not in the same way as with a man" 2c. In Luther's manuscript, this sentence reads: "Then like as a man before a Lord, ynn Ungnaden kehns dingsgnaden hatt, das desselben Herr ißt. doch bei eim anderern Herrn zcuflucht hatt. But Christ" 2c. Also in tz 12 "zugleich" is certainly correctly resolved by "gleicher Weise".

5) In the original: "niendert. In Luther's handwriting in the text: "nyrgen"; in the margin: "nyndert.

1) In print: "richt". In Luther's handwriting: "richet".

2) So the manuscript. In print, this last sentence is drawn to the following: "It is a great comfort that you have enemies."

and this shall last forever. This means that he says: They shall be a footstool of the seated King of Christ. He does not say, they shall be a block thrust away from His feet; to understand that as long as He sits, they shall be footstools, and at His feet, that is, forever. For his kingdom hath no end; so also, to be a footstool hath no end.

The third verse.

This third verse indicates the dominion of Christ, and that the scepter and royal power of Christ, that is, the Word and Gospel of Christ, is not of man, but of God alone. Therefore, it contains man in means of temptation.

The scepter of your power.

Because Christ is a King and a Lord, reigning in faith between the last day and fighting with his enemies, one would like to ask: with what strength, ability, scaffolding, 1) or weapons he does this? For to strike down enemies and make footstools out of them must be done with some 2) strength and ability, since his enemies are in great appearance of power, and he appears with his own in all their inabilities and much suffering. Then he answers that Christ's power and ability is not in worldly weapons, not in armor and iron, not in men and horses, not in any bodily strength and ability, for his kingdom is spiritual, spiritual enemies, therefore also spiritual weapons and armor. But 3) his strength and ability is in the scepter, that is, in the unconquerable word of God, in the holy Gospel. For the holy apostle calls the gospel a power or strength of God to all those who believe in it [Rom. 1:16].

12) The word *virga*, which is written here, is called a rod or staff in Latin, as the judges carry in their hands; but in Hebrew it is called a scepter, such a rod as is written of Jacob the patriarch [Gen. 47:31, Heb. 11:21],

that he worshipped the top or head of the rod that Joseph carried in his hand. This was the scepter over the kingdom of Egypt. For in like manner, 4) as such a rod is a sign, signifying the kingdom which he beareth, so it signifieth the gospel, and is a sign, revealing unto men the kingdom of Christ. It is also written [Esther 5:2] that King Ahasuerus held out to Queen Esther the golden rod, that is, his royal scepter, and she kissed the top, or head, of the same rod. Item, in the 45th Psalm, v. 7, of the same scepter David speaks: "A rod of righteousness is the rod of your kingdom."

13) And this is the rod, which is painted going out of the mouth of Christ, sitting on the rainbow; 5) and both the sword and the rod are the word of God, the royal scepter and the royal sword. And the fact that it is drawn from his mouth and not in his hand means that it is nothing else but the right and sharp word of God, which cuts off everything that is evil and unjust, and judges everything that is crooked. And is taken from the Scripture, Isa. 11, 4: "He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth", that is, punish the earthly people with the word of His mouth. 6) And the holy apostle Paul says [Eph. 6, 16. s.], "Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of GOD, above all things."

(14) The other word, "thy strength," strength or fortitude, expresses, not strength, that one may be strong in standing or standing fast, which strength is called cheap fortress or firmness, as a rock, strong castle, or city is strong, and not easily overcome; but here it is called strength or power, that one may be strong and mighty to overcome and subdue others, and to rule over them; as it is written of Nimrod [Gen. 10:8] that he was the first that was strong, that is, that subdued others, and took a dominion over them.

15 Therefore our dear Lord Christ is called by this little word in the Scriptures Dominus potens, Dominus virtutum, a Lord.

4) Handwriting: "then at the same time".

5) So the manuscript; print: "silesfend".

6) The words: "that is - mouth" are missing in print.

- 1) Scaffolding (handwriting: "sooty") - armor.

2) Print: "yendert"; manuscript: yrgend.

3) Handwriting: "Sundern"; print: "Harnisch sind darin, wann".

of strength, or mighty [Ps. 24:8]. And the little word "strength," as it stands here, is often taken for his kingdom, or for his mighty governing power. Therefore it is said the rod of thy strength, as much as the scepter of thy kingdom or power.

16 Now the prophet wants Christ to exercise no other power against the world, except the word of God alone, because we see daily that he does not act against sin, sinners and devils other than with words, and yet with the same word he has converted the whole world and brought it under himself. And until the last day, His own resist all temptation with this word, and with it defeat all the devices of the devil, of the flesh, and of the world. Therefore it is a rod of his power, of his kingdom.

God will send out from Sion.

17 That is, the gospel first began in Jerusalem [Isa. 2:3] and from there went out through the apostles into all the world. This is a great word against the wise talkers and dream preachers, who are quick to teach what they think is right, true and good, and are such fools that they think it is enough and fruitful because it is true and right. But recently, if you had all the wisdom of all Scripture and all reason, if it does not come from God and is not sent, it is all nothing. For God does not want one man to teach or master another, for He wants to be master Himself. Nor does God want a man to seek instruction from another as from a man, but only from God.

18) And what do you intend, you presumptuous, wretched man? Behold, 2) Christ, whom God hath set a Lord over all things, yet hath not power to send forth the word of God. For he does not say: The rod of your power you will send out, but: GOD will send them forth. Therefore he also speaks [Joh. 14, 26.]: "The Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name"; although he speaks in another place [Joh. 15, 26.]: "The Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name".

I will send you," but adds, "from the Father," as if to say, "The power is not from me, but from the Father. That is why our preachers of lies, who make themselves believe that they are the ones who speak the word and teach the people, are completely opposed to God and reach for his honor. Therefore they reproach and fill the churches with abominable prayers and words, and bear no fruit, but are only a mocking bird for the devil.

(19) But if you ask, "When and how does God send forth His word?" I say, "From Sion," that is, when God sets a man in the proper way of Christianity to the ministry of the word, and he is enlightened with the spirit of the Scriptures, when do I know this? I say, "Ask your experience about this. If the word cuts and strikes, and awakens the heart, it is sent by God. But it does not strike all, nor does it hurt 3) all; whom it strikes, it strikes. But the fact that it truly comes from God is a sure sign, when people begin to live by it with earnestness, and desire to hear it more and more; as it is written [Sir. 24, 28. 29.]: "He who eats me hungers for me more, and he who drinks me thirsts for me more." And so [Matt. 5:6], "For blessed are they that thirst after righteousness."

(20) And therefore it comes to pass, that the most beautiful sermons are preached in our lines, and little fruit comes of them; because they that say these things do not follow God, and they that hear them do not wait for God, (4) but shine out of human reason into human reason; so that it must be grace, and not reason, God, and not man. God will send forth the rod of thy strength; thus it is said, and not otherwise. This is also the word on which all heresies have come, and all stubborn, hopeful talkers, that they may teach boldly, uncalled by God, contenting themselves with it alone, 5) that they alone preach the Scriptures and the gospel, just as if it 6) were the truth.

1) "Teaching" taken by us from the manuscript.

2) In print: "himself"; manuscript: "himself".

3) In the manuscript: "vorletzt"; print: "verletzt". It seems to us that the latter reading is preferable.

4) Thus the manuscript; print: "words".

5) Thus the manuscript; print: "benügende".

6) "it" is in the manuscript but missing in print.

even possible that one man should be another's master to God.

For this reason, there is no annual thing on earth that is more dangerous than a highly intelligent mind, 1) especially if it is involved in spiritual things that affect the soul and God. For it is more possible to teach an ass to read, than to blind its reason and lead it to right, 2) if it must be blinded and come to naught.

22. of this kind are our blinded neighbors, the Bohemians, the wretched, miserable people, who, with their bright reason, see all things and understanding, except the understanding: that he who is not blind does not see, which is understanding of all Scripture, as Christ says [John 9:39.], "I am come into this world to judgment, that they who see may become blind, and they who are blind may see."

In short, where a man of the mind of the poor needs one master, a man of the mind of the kingdom needs ten masters; and even as it is said, the learned, the perverse. This is truly true: the more highly learned, the lower the student; the lower the student, the more highly learned. So also, the reasonable the unreasonable, the wise the unwise, and the wise do no small foolishness. So God wills it, and not otherwise; the richer reason, the poorer understanding; the poorer reason, the richer understanding. 3) God, God Himself, wants to send out His word, wisdom, art, help, blessedness, and to leave no man the same honor. Amen, amen, dear Father and gracious Lord, you are just.

Your dominion shall be in the means of your enemies.

24) That is, not among friends, not among roses or lilies, but among thorns and enemies I have placed your kingdom. 4) And from this it flows that all who want to serve God and be Christ's servants must suffer much stinging and repugnance; as Christ Himself says [John 16:33]: "In the world, in the world, in the world, in the world, in the world.

1) In print: highly rich, sensible.

2) Pressure: "dazzle" and "lead".

3) The words: "je armsinniger Vernunft, je reichsinniger Verstand" are missing in print.

4) So the handwriting; print: "dein ruten".

you will have tribulation 5) but in me alone peace." For thus it is decreed by God, and will not be otherwise: Your dominion shall be in the midst of your enemies. Enemies shall be all around you; you alone with your own in their means.

(25) So thorns prick us, which are the evil words and works of men, the evil inspiration of the devil, our own flesh, and the conscience of sins committed. And he that will not suffer these things will not be of the lordship of Christ, but will be in the means of friends, sit in the roses and lilies, be not with evil men, but with godly men. Therefore he hates and flies in the face of the wicked; yea, he flies, promises, 6) and talks after them, seeking and praising the pious alone. He does not sing otherwise than: *Benedicite aliqua opera Domini Domino; and: Benedicam Dominum in aliquo tempore. Aliquando laus ejus in ore meo; non omnia, non omni tempore, non semper.*

(26) But Christ's true brethren are like him, loving the wicked, praising, excusing and interceding for them, praising and thanking God in all of this. And this is called suppressing spiritual enemies and ruling. They sing [Ps. 103, 22]: *Benedicite omnia opera. Domini Domino. Et [Ps. 34, 2]: Benedicam Dominum in omni tempore: semper laus ejus in ore meo.*

(27) These are not like the Picards of Bohemia, the spiritual Jews and wretched heretics, who flee from the evil Christians and crawl into their own corners. O blasphemers and betrayers of Christ! If Christ had done as you 8) do, who would have been saved? He emptied himself of his divinity [Phil. 2, 7], his piety and wisdom, and wanted to be with sinners, men and fools, so that he might fill them; yes, he took them to himself, never wanting to have anything to do with the spiritual pious, the righteous. What are you doing? Absurd!

We are not like the Germans, we do not want to be like the Roman Church for the fear of God. That is so much, we want

5) The handwriting: gedreng; print: getrang.

6) promises - he talks disparagingly. - Immediately following in the original: "nachredet" instead of: redet nach.

7) Thus the handwriting; print: "guten".

8) "so" from the handwriting.

go to the devil in God's name, and let the Germans go to God in the devil's name. Oh God, where does man want to go with his wisdom? You get rid of other people's sin, you load yourselves with your own righteousness and wisdom, and Christ got rid of his own righteousness and wisdom, and loaded himself with other people's sin and wickedness. Eia, how finely you follow Christ! You say: *Miserere mei*,²) *sana animam meam*, *quia peccavi tibi*. You say: *Perde illos*, *quia*³) *peccaverunt tibi*; *nos sumus populus Dei*, *illi populus diaboli*. Now, dear God the Father, have mercy on the wretched erring people, and do not set their blasphemy to eternal sin.

The children of God do not flee the company of the wicked; indeed, they seek them out so that they may help them. They do not want to go to heaven alone, but to bring with them the most sinful, if they want to. 4. But they that will not suffer are servants, and not masters in the means of their enemies, because they yield and are subject to temptation. This is that they do not know the strength of the scepter, and their heart is not right toward God, but crooked, and inclined into temporal chamber and peace from within, and do not stand with Christ inwardly in chamber and peace in God.

(30) But the righteous persevere in right faith, and overcome, though they die, be made poor, or be blasphemed. To them the gospel is a rod of strength and divine power. Therefore the little word "your dominion" rhymes with the word "your power". For the same power (as touched above [§ 11]) makes the reign of Christ. For since the power is to put down and subdue others, his dominion must of necessity be no other than among the enemies who are to be put down.

The fourth verse.

31 This fourth verse indicates that Christ's people are of a free, unrelated will, not by nature but by grace, not in outward appearance but in inner

The first is the dew born from the Mother of the Dawn, that is, the Holy Christian Church.

Your peoples shall be the volunteers.

(32) These are the single-minded, serene people, who are of a single will and do not cling to any thing, but only to the will of God, that is, that they neither desire good nor fear evil, equally respecting death and life, having and having not, honor and weakness; being satisfied and content only with that [it is] the will of God.

(33) Those who serve God out of childish and temporal love and seek for their own sake, for gifts and rewards, whether temporal or eternal, or out of embarrassing and servile fear, in order to escape pain or adversity, temporal or eternal, are excluded here. For if heaven were not, or hell, or if God did not give temporal goods, honor or health, they would not serve Him at all, and would quickly fall from His love. For they do not mean God, but seek themselves also from God, and cling to the goods outside God, the highest good. Therefore, if God is not their good and comfort, they must fear hellish torment and suffering, and cannot be otherwise.

But the children of God, who voluntarily perceive the willing will of God alone in His will, and are pleased with it, and are willing to do and suffer everything for its sake, do not flee, nor do they fear hell, death and suffering; nor do they seek the chamber of life or heaven; on both sides, free, separate and unattached between the two, they press toward the right road to God's will. But this is not possible for nature and Adam's children, but the Holy Spirit must work this in man with grace, and make him a child of Christ. This happens through the Word of God and the firm, true faith.

35 Therefore the Jews, pagans and heretics are not the people of Christ, for they seek their will without God and in their works. Therefore it follows that the kingdom of Christ is in the midst of the enemies, since

1) "with" is missing i "i print.

2) In print: *Alissrolniui*.

3) *yuaia* is inserted from the manuscript.

4) Print: "in", that is, to them.

5) Pressure: and.

Death, suffering, fear and all kinds of adversity. For who has anything good among enemies, and especially among such enemies, that is, the devils and the whole world, even his own conscience and flesh? Therefore it cannot be otherwise, for the people of Christ must despise all these things and not fear them, nor love the other 1) things, but be free, and accept all these things with joy, and forgive themselves this chamber with joy.

In the day of your power.

36) That is, in the time of grace, in which your power is spent, and human weakness is helped. For the Scripture states two times: one of sickness; 2) which was, and is, in all those who live under the law. For since men kept the commandments of God not voluntarily and out of love, but out of servile fear or childish love, the commandment was only an unmistakable burden and burden to them, and impossible for them to fulfill. For God's commandment must be fulfilled voluntarily, and that is not possible for nature. That is why it has fallen ill and succumbed under the law, and has become incapable of fulfilling it. When the Jews served God for the promise of the Jewish land, and for the fear and dread of losing it. For all these who are not yet fortified with God's power, and are in the day of this powerlessness, and outside of God's graces and cooperation, it is not possible for them not to fear adversity, suffering, death, weakness, and again to love the house, blessedness, life, and honor, and by this disorderly fleeing and seeking not to do and sin against God's will. For they are in Adam's day, under the law, in the time of their inability, left to themselves without the help of grace.

The other time is the time of grace and help, by which man is strengthened to freely keep God's will and commandment out of pure love of God; not to do them for their own sake.

Nor to leave it, either by suffering or by dying, for the sake of benefit or reward. Now this is not the work of nature, but of grace. Therefore he does not say, in the day of strength, but "in the day of thy strength," which thou givest them. Now this is the opinion: Your people, with whom you rule among your enemies and manifold sufferings, will yet be free and willing in all this. This does not make their strength, but that they are strengthened in the day of your strength, with the help of your grace.

In sacred adornment.

That is, they will be adorned with inward adornment, which no one sees except God, and he who sees and knows God; as in the 45th Psalm, v. 14: *Omnis gloria filiae regis ab intus* "all adornment of the King Christ's daughter is inward" and hidden. For in Hebrew also that is called holy, which is hidden and separated from all senses in spiritual darkness. Therefore *sacrum* is also called *quasi secretum* in Latin. For outward adornment of the body, in silk, gold and precious stone, white, red, beautiful face, yellow hair, skilful body, good food and drink, splendid and delicious houses, dainty bedsteads and beds, large servants, beautiful wives and children, plus great honor, and dignities, and everything that may adorn and praise a man in time, and make him esteemed and pleasing in the sight of men or in his own sight, 5) even art, wisdom, and godliness, all these are not the ornament nor adornment of the true people of Christ. For none of these are hidden, spiritual, or holy, but may be known by men.

39) But spiritual adornment and holy adornment is so deeply hidden, not only from other people, but also from themselves, that they do not know how beautiful they are in the sight of God, nor would it be good for them to know. 6) Yes, they cannot know it, otherwise it would not be a hidden adornment. And even if they all have the above-mentioned worldly adornment and decoration, it is still as if they had nothing but filth and shapelessness, 5) In the manuscript: "genuine", there- iA declare to be genuine.

6) The words: "how dainty - knew" seemed in print.

1) Handwriting: "anderweyten"; print: "andern weytern."

2) Pressure: Sick.

3) In print: trowen; manuscript: "drawen."

4) Pressure: confirmed.

before deep immersion of their will and desire in God's will, without which will they neither respect nor know anything. In which they therefore disappeared and went out with Abraham from all things [Gen. 12, 1], so that they no longer respect God. Therefore, as pure as God's will is and beautiful, so they are also 1) beautiful because they have made themselves into it.

40 Behold, this purity and inward purity of will from all things is the proper adornment of Christ's people, surpassing all adornment that a man can devise. For in this adornment is eternal and all-embracing adornment, and without this adornment all other adornment is a stinking taint and footcloth. For this is signified in the clear, white and clear appearance of the angels at the tomb [Matth. 28, 3], and in the transfiguration of our Lord and Savior on Mount Thabor [Matth. 17, 2]. Therefore the old text does not speak badly: In splendoribus sanctorum, sive splendoribus sancti, vel claritate rerum sanctarum, that is, in holy clarity, and spiritual inward sincerity, that is, inward and hidden, which is also in far other things than the world's adornment; as, in poor clothing, unhealthy, clumsy body, pale, sorrowful face, evil eating and drinking, unseemly bearing, and in short, as the apostle describes it [2 Cor. 6, 4-6. 11, 27]: "In hunger and thirst, in heat and frost, in fear and sorrow, in affliction and distress" 2c. Not that it is always there; 2) but that these things are not a hindrance to it, yea, conducive to it.

In the womb of the mother of the dawn shall be born unto thee the dew of thy childbearing.

The word "mother", in Latin *matrix* or *uterus*, does not mean here a very personal mother, as a woman is called mother, but that, as the fruit is conceived in the womb, and is nourished until birth. And that is why it is expressed in this way, so that the future heretics who say that Christ is not a true man will not exist.

or Mary's natural son. For that which is conceived and born of the same mother of a woman is undoubtedly not an offspring, but a natural child, truly taken from the flesh and blood of the same woman, grown up and nourished for eight or nine months.

Secondly, that it may be understood that Christ is the only Son of a woman, not taken from a man, but only from the womb of His mother. And all this against the consent of the Jews, who would not that Mary, a virgin, should be the mother. For all other children are described in Scripture as coming from seed and from the loins or womb of men, and are also all ascribed to the father and not to the mother, except Christ our Lord alone, who is ascribed to his mother alone and not to any father, and that he was not taken from seed but from the mother or womb of his mother, as he says Ps. 22, 10.: *Extraxisti me de ventre*, thou hast taken me out of the womb, not milked me in, as Job says, that he was milked as milk from his father [Job 10, 10.].

Now the tender Virgin Mary is called in many places a dawn, because she brought forth the true day and the eternal light and the sun of righteousness, Christ. From the same dawn mother will come the dew of your childhood, that is, through the heavenly action of the Holy Spirit, your childhood will come from a virgin. For this is why he calls his childhood a dew, that as the dew falls from heaven without human thought, word or work, so the tender humanity of Christ came to this earth from Mary, without man or man's work, wrought from above by the Holy Spirit alone, as it is written in the Psalm: "He shall descend as the rain upon the skin of Gideon" [Ps. 72, 6. not. 6, 37. 38.].

44 Now, although the words give and suffer this understanding, it is nevertheless forced and driven out. But the birth of Christ's people is described here in a self-flowing sense. Notice that these words are spoken to Christ as

1) Pressure: also, too.

2) Thus the manuscript; print: "be".

he already is and is a Lord. The little word "you" indicates that he speaks of other children, because of Christ, otherwise it would be enough to say: "Out of the morning mother your childhood will be born. Now he says, your childhood will be born to you. Now this is the opinion that Christ is a Lord and King, and has beautiful people; so he must also have a queen or a bride, and not be barren. For such a king must also have heirs and children. He describes them thus: as his kingdom is spiritual, spiritual people, spiritual power, spiritual adornment, so one should not think that Christ will have a wife and children in the flesh, as the Jews wait for their Messiah, but his wife, bride and queen is called aurora, the dawn, that is, the Christian church, from the same mother or womb come his children. That is why I have Germanized "Kindschaft" and not, childhood, as team means assembly of men, priesthood of priests; so Kindschaft are the whole church, his sons and daughters.

This dawn is a spiritual virgin, figured and signified by Mariam, and conceived of spiritual seed, that is, of the Word of God; which does not take away her virginity, but preserves it more. He calls these same children "the dew," because no soul is converted and changed from Adam's sinful filiation into the gracious filiation of Christ by human work, but only by the action of God from heaven, like the dew, as Micah writes in Cap. 5, 6: "The children of Israel shall be like the dew given by God, which waits not for the hands of man." For man was once created the child of Adam by the work of the flesh; but if he is to become the child of Christ, it must be by the work of the Spirit. "That which is of the flesh is flesh" [John 3:6]. So, he gave them power to become children of God, not those who are born of blood or the pleasure of the flesh, but those who are born of God [John 1:12, 13].

46 Now, the mother of this dawn is love in the heart, in which it receives all men, carries them, nourishes them 2c. when Paul to

To the Galatians [Cap. 4:19] he says, "Dear brethren, I bear you but one, until Christ be formed in you"; and to the Corinthians [1 Ep. 4:15], "I have given you birth through the gospel." In these words Paul calls himself a mother, and his uter he shows that [it] is his love, and the seed the gospel.

These words are spoken against the false hope and carnal presumption of the Jews, who think that they alone are the children of God, because they are the children of Abraham and the holy patriarchs, born of the flesh and carnal works. This birth is rejected here, because it is not enough; as the Lord also said to Nicodemus against the same conceit [John 3:3], "Except a man be born again, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Thus one still finds many who have this Jewish sense, and want God to see the person as being of this or that order or life, and to keep the or the saints' 2) rule.

The fifth verse.

This fifth verse speaks of the priesthood of 3) Christ our Lord, and how he is set up by God with an oath as a priest and mediator for an eternal fortification and special comfort, so that all righteousness and peace come through Jesus the man alone.

God has sworn and will never repent.

49) Behold, up to this point he has described the king, his kingdom, his scepter, his enemies and his people; 4) now he describes his priesthood. And it is to be noted here that God does not swear to the kingdom of Christ,

1) Pressure: den.

2) Print: the or the holy rule.

3) "Priesthood" here, as in the superscription, is saeerckotium, priesthood. Luther uses "priesthood" throughout. The change to "PriefterMt" is either due to Spalatin, who directed the printing in Augsburg, or to the printer!

4) In the manuscript is here still hiWgW-t: „his time, his jewelry, his queen, beMDWer. Whether Luther himself had this in the print manuscript WWW, we b "may not determine. [V

but badly says (as touched above [v. 1]): God has said to my Lord. But to institute the priesthood of Christ, God makes an oath, and with an oath confirms Christ as priest, and yet to this: "and shall not repent of him." What is this, or what is it necessary, that God swears, 1) who cannot lie?

(50) First, to distinguish all other priesthoods, which shall finally cease. For their cessation is that God no longer desires or wants them. And this is called "repenting to God", as the priesthood of Aaron and Levi. But Christ's priesthood never ends in eternity, but he offers himself and his own to the Father forever.

(51) Secondly, for the inexpressible sweet comfort of us poor sinful men, that we may the more boldly believe and hope that Christ is a priest. For it is easier 2) to believe that Christ is Lord over all things, so that man may fear him because of his great power. But that he is a priest is difficult 3) to believe, because of our stupid and sinful conscience, which despairs and is easily frightened by God's power, and hardly trusts that his sins are forgiven. God raises up this stupid despondency and makes it comforting to His mercy, in that He calls Christ a priest, that is, a patron, intercessor, mediator, payer of all sin; and that with oaths, with greater diligence, His mercy is shown: Proclaiming his mercy more diligently than his power, that he may raise up more confidence than fear in man. Therefore, this verse 4) should be covered with gold and vain precious stones, so that it sounds so comforting and gracious.

You shall be a priest forever.

52. it belongs to a priest, says the apostle St. Paul [Heb. 5:1-3], that he should

1) Pressure: swears.

2) Pressure: is.

3) Pressure: heavier.

4) In the manuscript: "As."; in print: "Vers. It seems to us that the print has correctly resolved the abbreviation "Vs-", which we encounter three times in the manuscript, namely here, § 59 and 866, by "verse"; especially the last passage shows it clearly. "Psalm," for which the Weimar edition has taken it, is given by Luther throughout by "ps." ps.

5) "vain" is missing in print.

pray and sacrifice for those who err and sin, and be a good mediator against God. Now says God, you shall be the same, no one else but you alone. So, for whom you mediate, he shall be blessed; otherwise no one shall be saved by his works, or be able to do enough. Thus God directs us from ourselves to Christ, as Pharaoh directed the Egyptians to Joseph [Gen. 41:55]. And through Him alone, and without Him no one shall be saved. 6) Therefore the apostle says [Rom. 3, 25.] that God has set him as a propitiator, that is, as a throne of grace, before whom every man obtains grace and salvation. There are still many more hopeful saints, who drive with their righteousness, and want to be priests for themselves, and do not hear that God does not say to them, but to Christ, "You shall be a priest."

According to the way or order of Melchizedech.

53) Melchizedech was a king and priest, and sacrificed wine and bread, also for the holy patriarch Abraham and for his servants. 7) In which figure is meant that no saint is so pious, if Christ did not sacrifice for him, he would be 8) condemned. For he alone is priest for all men. 9) Therefore he is rightly called, Melchi Zedech; Melchi a king, Zedech righteousness. He is the king, the head of righteousness, from whom it must flow into all his limbs; all other righteousness or piety is wickedness against it.

54) So he is also called sol justitiae, that he is the fountain, origin, head, sun and beginning of justice [Mal. 4, 2]. And here it is not called righteousness, so that God judges the damned, as is now common in the custom against the Scriptures, which call this righteousness, which is given by grace and mercy to the faithful of Christ; as it is said: Qui justificat impium, id est, dat peccatori justitiam, who justifies the sinner. makes [Proverbs 17:15].

6) Thus the manuscript; print: none shall be saved.

7) In the manuscript is added here: "das doch Wohl [ge]than had]."

8) "yet" is missing in print.

9) Handwriting: allzumal; print: all people.

55) About the name Melchi Zedech 1) he was also called Melchisalem, id est rex pacificus,²⁾ rex pacis, that is, a king of peace [Hebr. 7, 2]. For true peace of conscience cannot be where sin is. Therefore righteousness is before peace, and both of Christ, the true Melchi Zedech and Melchisalem. For his place 3) and kingdom is in peace, as the Psalm says: Et factus est in Salem locus ejus, et habitatio ejus in Sion, his dwelling is in peace [Ps. 76, 3.], for Salem was called 4) the city where the king was, which is now called Jerusalem, visio pacis, that is, sonication in peace. Also Zion is called visio pacis. Therefore Zion and Salem are both put together from the: Verse, and is now called Jerusalem for Zion's Salem; for it means the same as one.

But peace is not external; otherwise the other verse, interpreted above, would be wrong. In the midst of his enemies, and in strife, is this peace; the more strife, the more peace; the more man's enmity, the more God's friendship; and again.

Now what is that he offers bread and wine for Abraham? This expresses 5) the priesthood of Christ in this time until the last day, that he offers the hidden sacrament of the altar, his holy body and his precious blood, in Christianity. Which hidden his body means, that also all his people are inwardly and hidden, also from themselves, as above 38 f.] and especially that he himself reigns and dwells in them.

The sixth verse.

This sixth verse tells of the rejection of the Jews, and that God protects Christ and the church on the right hand, that is, in spiritual things, and thus destroys their opponents and the repugnant on the left, and especially the trusting Jews in the day of His wrath.

The LORD who is at your right hand.

59) This is when in the first verse 5] 6) it is said, God is with you in the hidden goods, when also in the 16th Psalm, v. 8, it is said, "God is on my right side, therefore I will not be moved"; and in the 20th Psalm, v. 7: "The blessedness of His right hand, it is in strength and power." So Christ and His people are on the left side, according to the outer man, among the enemies, in suffering and strife; and God is not with Him there, but leaves Him there. But to the right side, to the inner man, he is among friends, in comfort and peace, and GOD is there with him, and stands by him there. This is what he says here: God, who stands by you on the right side and is with you, does not leave you or yours. But he 7)

Has broken the kings in the day of his wrath.

(60) That is, all who are against you, for they also are against him. But none so nearly 8) oppose Christ, as kings and mighty men, who will not that all authority should be Christ's. But if he break the kings, rather the others that are not so mighty.

61) Now notice here that Christ does not avenge himself, 9) but God does it for him, as said above in the other verse. The day of God's wrath is this time of grace. For just as grace begins in the pious and endures forever, so wrath and judgment begin in the wicked and unbelievers. And the kings that were in the land of Judea are utterly destroyed 11) by the Romans: so that the people of Judaea can have no more kings. They are broken; for the people are scattered, therefore also the princes, lords, and kings with their kingdom and principality. This is what the Lord is doing on your right side with you and for you.

6) Thus set by us. The print offers: "als am ersten gesagt ist"; the manuscript: "alh ym ersten ^s. gesagt ist." Compare the note to K 51. >

7) In the handwriting: "rc." instead of: er. '

8) Print: as; handwriting: but so.

9) In print "richt". Because of our Utzflöfung compare above p

6. - In the manuscript steÜM: "vechenet."

10) In print: "sacht"; m der HandWst: "fetzt".

11) Handwriting: broken.

1) Print: is called; handwriting: "hot", that is, was called.

2) I-2X paoiticus is missing from the manuscript.

3) Handwriting: "sein stete"; print: "stat".

4) Print: means; handwriting: hot.

5) In the handwriting: expresses.

tend, because they fought and contended against thee on thy left hand, and would have laid down thy kingdom; therefore their kingdom is laid down. And so now he reigns in the midst of his enemies.

The seventh verse.

This seventh verse says of the acceptance of the Gentiles, and that God judges the Gentiles, and fulfills their infirmities, and destroys their power, and submits them to the Lord Christ in faith.

He will be a judge in the Gentiles.

(63) The Jews with their kings did not want him, and were destroyed and devastated. Therefore the Gentiles received him, and he accepted them as a nation, and left the Jews.

He is a judge, as the Psalms often say, and judges and rules the Gentiles. This judgment is that he acts in the Gentiles the cross with them, mortifies 1) and forces the old man with his vices, so that the inner man is kept. He should be a judge of the Jews; so they want to remain in the old man.

He will fulfill what has fallen apart.

65 That is, he will fill the humble with grace; he will make alive those who are dead. For he that is fallen spiritually is humble, and findeth nothing in him that standeth, or is whole, but all things are broken down and fall to pieces: therefore is he worthy to be edified. Therefore the Jews are forsaken, that they would not be ruined; they would not be blind and sick, but would stand whole, and see, and be godly. He cannot fill the full, they become empty; as the Psalm says: "He has filled the wretched and hungry souls" [Ps. 107:9].

He will crush or bruise the heads that have risen on earth.

66) This verse 2) is unintelligible because of the bad language, one into the other. 3) Triple

1) Jni print: "köstigt", that is, kasteiet (vustiſut), - In Luther's handwriting: "casteyget".

2) In the handwriting „^s." for "verse". Compare the note to ? 51.

3) Pressure: other.

lei must be interpreted for the same half. First of all: The chiefs are the powerful ones in the whole Gentile community, especially the Romans, who were the chiefs of the bets at that time. If now the text stands thus, as St. Jerome holds: Percutiet caput in terra multorum, 4) then it is certainly the city of Rome, which was the head over many countries, but not all. For it was against the city that Christ was most set, 5) so that the devil, as in the head of the world, was most powerful. As also Daniel signifies in his interpretation of the great image which the king had seen, smitten with a stone at the bottom of the feet which were iron [Dan. 2, 45.], which all the doctors interpret, and the Jews 6) of the Roman empire.

Now, he will strike the head over many lands, that is, the kingdom, which is a head over many lands and earths. This battle is given to Christ, therefore it is a gracious battle, according to the outward nature. For Rome is outwardly contrite, but spiritually greatly edified. Therefore the smiting 7) is not in the day of wrath, like the kings, but has become another head of Christianity. Therefore Job stands on the 40th [v. 26.^s, that the dragon's head should come in a little fish. The dragon is the devil; his body is the world; the head is Rome; who rules the world and has under her, has become small and closed in St. Peter's little fish. 8) Our text may also give this: Conquassabit capita in terra multorum, he has crushed, who are heads of many people, land and earth; and the land, which many have had, has all come under the Romans, and they are also crushed. So the power is broken, both of the Jews and of the Gentiles, and Christ alone reigns. This mind pleases me well.

68. to the eavesdropping: He has smashed the

4) Thus the manuscript according to the Vulgate; print: multu.

5) The words: "yet not - laid" are missing in print.

6) "and the Jews" is added in print.

7) Print: "beaten".

8) In print, "geschlossen. Likewise in the Wittenberg and Jena. More appropriate to the context seems Walch's reading: "geschlossen" ("closed"), which also the Erlangen and Weimar ones have adopted, but Luther's manuscript offers: "geschlüffen," that is, geschlüpft. '

Heads on the earth of many, that is, not all who are mighty on the earth, he has contrite, but of the many. For he hath not humbled them all among himself 1) in all countries; some and many, but not all.

69 Thirdly: He has crushed the heads on earth of many, that is, the heads that have made themselves much on earth, and raised themselves up. And this mind would be that all heads were crushed, that would have to be understood in anger.

The eighth verse.

70 This eighth verse tells of the suffering of Christ our Lord, through which he came to touching glory and power, and through the temporal suffering became the head of all things.

He will drink in his departure from the stream of water.

71 All these things will happen to him for the merit of his suffering. "Water" in the Scripture means suffering, as in the 69th Psalm, v. 1: "The waters have gone into me even to my life" 2c. "Water stream" is swift and strong great suffering. He does not say that he will drink up everything, but that he will "drink of it" and let others drink of it as well.

(72) And "in his departure," that is, in his life, which is a course or way to death; but after the end of that course he shall suffer nothing, but rejoice forever. And his enemies, who rejoice in their departure, will have to drink of the river of water eternally after this life, that is, eternal suffering.

Therefore he will lift up his head.

This is why he will become a Lord and head of all creatures, as the apostle says [Phil. 2:8, 9], that he emptied himself and became obedient to the death of the cross. Therefore God has exalted him and given him a name that is above every name, that is, that he is called Lord and is above all creatures. And everything that has a name and is something, that is

subject to him; so that in his name all knees are bent in heaven, earth and hell, except for him who is unnamed and without a name, and who is also apart from all beings, God himself.

And so Christ is a Lord over the Jews and the Gentiles, in whom") he has broken all authority over both of them, as the 46th Psalm says. Psalm, v. 11, says: Exaltabor in gentibus, exaltabor in terra, that is, "I will be exalted in the Gentiles, and will be exalted in the land of the Jews". But if he was to be exalted in both, then those who were exalted in both had to be humbled. And these were the kings and the chiefs that were abased; some with violence and in wrath, and some with will and goodness. Therefore the Scripture calls him a king of the Jews, and also a king of the Gentiles. This also the 67th Psalm, v. 5. holds: Laetentur et exultent gentes etc., that is, the Gentiles shall rejoice and leap, because thou art a judge of the Jewish people in the rightness, and a judge 4) or duke of the Gentiles in the earth.

75 The other psalm, v. 1, also agrees with this, saying, "Why are the heathen so fierce, and the men of the Jews so useless in counsel?" that is, why do they strive against, and intend not to be under Christ, but in their power to press him down, which is a vain and useless undertaking. V. 2: "The kings have come together, and the princes have come together against God, and against His Christ," that is, the enemies who are made Christ's footstool, who did not want to have God's King, Christ; therefore they are also against God. What did they mean by their presumption? V. 3: "Let us break their bands, and let us cast away their burdens," that is: Ye brethren, GOD's and his Christ's bands, violence and the scepter of his strength we will not suffer, he shall not reign in the midst of Us his enemies. But what follows? V. 4. 5.: "He who is in heaven will laugh at them, and God will not let them go.

2) Thus Luther's manuscript and the Zmavr. The first" print: "wölche".

3) Print: "in suffering".

4) Handwriting: More correct.

1) Print: "in", that is, him; handwriting: himself.

will mock them for doing such useless things. For so shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and in his anger shall he destroy them." This is what the sixth verse here says: "The Lord, who is with you at your right hand, destroyed the kings in the day of his wrath. Further follows, v. 6: "But I am set by him a king in his holy mountain Sion." This is what is said here: "God has said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand.'"

76) And that he also should be a judge in the Gentiles, and not be set over Sion alone, in the place of the kings and princes that were destroyed, saith he, and concordireth, v. 7, 8: "God hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I born thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the Gentiles for an earth, and for an inheritance all the ends of the earth," that is, that he will smite the heads in many lands of the Gentiles, for the one land of the Jews that rejected and rejected him.

Now there is one more thing that may move one: how does the fourth verse of this Psalm, according to our text, concord and coincide with the Hebrew text? Thus ours says: 1) With thee the beginning in the day of thy strength, in the clear shining of the saints, out of the mother; before the morning star I gave thee birth. This verse or text is very incomprehensible. But the Hebrew text is as above, "Thy people are the volunteers in the day of thy strength, in spiritual adornment; out of the morning star mother shall come to thee the dew of thy childbearing." The two pieces in the middle of the psalm concord, especially the: "in the day of your strength". And the other: "in holy adornment", with this: "in clarities or shining of the saints"; as is said above. For the holy clearness or purity, that is the holy adornment, which is proper to the saints, and holy things.

But how does the first: "With you is the beginning" rhyme against the: "Your people are the volunteers"? The cause of these ambiguous texts is finely seen in the Hebrew tongue. Now, in order to concord this, one has to get it far away from-

We have to bear, yes, we have to let go of the glosses that are forcefully applied to our text. For the dear fathers of old were inclined, for the sake of the heretics, to interpret the Scriptures concerning the divinity of Christ, where it would have suffered, even though the text thoroughly did not. So they did here and glossed: "With you the beginning", that is: O you the beginning of Christ, who are the beginning and the end after the Godhead, with you I am in the day 2c. So the last also: "Out of the mother before the morning star I have born you"; that is, out of the secret nature of my Godhead, before the morning star was created, I have born you. Although there are also some who interpret this last one according to humanity: "Out of the mother 2c., that is, out of the womb and uterus of Mary, before the morning star rose in the night, I gave birth to you. Now, these 2) are completely forced and cunning 3) interpretations.

79 Thus they have also interpreted that in the other Psalm, v. 7, of his Godhead: God has said to me: "You are my son, today I have born you"; as this is said after mankind. Likewise [Ps. 89, 27.], "He shall call me: my Father, and he shall be my Son." Item [Phil. 2, 9.], "He hath given him a name above every name," though he speaks there of the man Christ, who is exalted. For according to the Godhead he is not exalted, neither has he received a name from God.

80 Now, we will leave aside these words, although it cannot be concorded without force, thus: "With you is the beginning," that is, God is with you, Christ, and with all of yours in grace, therefore you and yours are strong and free. For with whom God, who is the beginning of all, is not, he is not free, nor does he fulfill the commandment of God; for he is left to himself, and is not free of his own will, but is captive to his own will. Therefore in this Concordance the word "with thee" must be spoken [to Christ], not for himself, but for his own.

1) See the text of the Vulgate, above Col. 890 f., note.

2) In print: "So diß sind", but in the manuscript "So" is crossed out.
3) "geweltigete" - violent. Print: violent.

So "with you"] 1), that is, with your people, as in the 68th Psalm, v. 19: *Accepisti dona in hominibus*: "you have received the gifts in men", which some interpret thus: Your people have received the gifts. But the right understanding is that St. Peter gives [Apost. 2, 33.]: *Accepta promissione Spiritus Sancti, effudit, id est, accepisti dona in homines; id est, potestatem dandi dona hominibus*. And 2) Paul [Eph. 4, 8]: *Dedit dona hominibus*.

It follows that our text expresses the origin from which the people of Christ come voluntarily; namely, that is the origin, that the beginning, God Himself, is with them, and thus makes them voluntary. Therefore one often finds that our text goes higher than the Hebrew, but in the same opinion. So now this: "From the Uter before the morning star I have born you." "Thee," that is, thine own, thy filiation, thy children, as above [§80] "with thee" 3) is interpreted. "Have I born," that is, that no work of man, nor 4) flesh or blood, makes Christ's children, but GOD gives them birth, and makes them, even as the dew falls from GOD, and without work of man. Therefore John also says: "Who are born of God" [John 1:3]. Now both of these are true: "I have born thee," and this: "unto thee shall come the dew of thy childbearing."

82) Further: "From the Uter before the morning star", that is, from the love of Christianity, as said above [§ 46], that the Uter is the love of God in the souls of Christians, from which God gives birth to the children of Christ, and teaches through the Uter, as that the children of Christ are born of God, but through fellow-

The effect and the cooperation of Christianity, but without carnal work; but with the love and teaching of the word of God, that is, from the dawn mother, in Hebrew. And in this, however, our text goes higher than the Hebrew. For by the little word "thy childship" it expresses the origin and giver and master of the same childship. Just as he expresses above, v. 3, by the little word "the volunteers" also the beginning and origin of the same.

Now there is still: "Before 6) the morning star. There is no doubt that the morning star comes before the dawn and brings it with it. The dawn is Christianity, the same also the morning star from Christianity love; and yet, before it [it] knows or works, 7) God has born from it; as in Isaiah [Cap. 49, 21.]: "I am forsaken and barren, where do all these children come from me?" Thus, not without her, and yet without her, GOtt works pious people. Just as in nature, not without the mothers, and yet without the mothers, he creates children from their bodies, precedes them in themselves. 8) So also in every man he comes beforehand with grace, and works before we call for grace or cooperate. These are called the *Doctores gratiam primam et praevenientem*, that is, the first and preceding grace.

**9)B. Augustine:
Gratia Dei praevenit, ut
velimus, ne frustra
velimus.**

1) These words in brackets are missing in all editions, but are in Luther's handwriting.

2) Print: Ünäe, instead of: And.

3) "with you" is missing in print.

4) In print: kein Menschen Werk, Fleisch 2c.

5) Handwriting: "word". The first print: "warn".

6) Print: from.

7) In the original: weiße oder wirke. In the handwriting: "weiß oder wirkt".

8) Print: "their bodies" instead of: themselves.

9) The following is missing from Luther's manuscript.

25. second interpretation of the 110th Psalm. *)

Preached in 1538, printed in 1539.

The 110th Psalm, Dixit Dominus,

preached and interpreted in 1539. **)

1. this is the right high main psalm made by our dear Lord Jesus Christ, in which both, his person, who he is, namely both, David's promised son according to the flesh and God's eternal son, in addition an eternal king and priest, and his resurrection, ascension and whole kingdom are described so clearly and powerfully, that the like is nowhere to be read in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Therefore it is worthy and appropriate that it be sung and performed at such feasts of the Lord Christ as Easter, Ascension and Pentecost. Just as it is often referred to in the New Testament Scriptures, both by Christ Himself and the apostles, as the most prominent one that establishes and confirms the article of the person of Christ and His spiritual kingdom and righteousness.

2) In particular, it is clearly prophesied and described how he should be the one King and Lord promised to this people, especially to David, and also the eternal priest, through whom all the world should be blessed and reconciled, as promised to Abraham and modeled through the priest Melchizedek, and to whom the entire Levitical priesthood points and shows that he is much more than the king.

would be another king and priest than he ever was, or still wants to be. For no one has ever been prophesied and praised, who has been so gloriously proclaimed beforehand by the mouth of God, and consecrated and crowned by Himself, as this Psalm begins: "The Lord said" 2c.

3. And is it ever a marvelous enlightenment that the holy prophet David speaks so excellently of the things that were to happen so long afterwards, and which we now believe to have happened, and yet none of us could speak of them in such a way, and almost precedes the apostles themselves, that he sums it up so powerfully, and with such bright, clear words, and yet all with one another so excellently briefly, that it is not human, nor of a small spirit, to reach with words such a high, incomprehensible and unfathomable mystery of the divine majesty, which was to be revealed in the Gospel, much less to grasp it so briefly and powerfully, especially so long before it was to happen, and no beginning, no miracle work, no public sermon had yet been seen or heard. He still clings so firmly with faith to such things as he does not see, nor understand with reason, and is so certain of them that he also speaks of them as if he saw them.

*Luther preached about this Psalm in 1838 (not only in 1539, as the editions indicate), probably after Easter in continuous sermons (Köstlin, M. Luther f3, Aufl.T Bd. II, p. 437 f.). These sermons were copied by v. Cruciger and put into print. The printer Nickel Schirlentz in Wittenberg had his concession revoked because he had printed the epigrams of Lernius. Luther pleaded with the Elector in a letter at the beginning of September 1538, in which he asked that he be allowed to print this interpretation of the Psalm Vixit Vominns and "sunst noch ein buchlein. This permission was granted and the concession restored by a electoral rescript to the university, dated Thursday after Xativ. s*larine) (Sept. 12) 1538. (Burkhardt, Briefwechsel, p. 311.) Thus our psalm appeared with him under the title: "Der 6X Psalm Dixit Dominus, gepredigt und ausgelegt, durch D. Mart. vuther. Wittemberg. 1. 539". At the end: "Printed at Wittemberg by Nickel Schirlentz. M. D. XXXIX." In the collective editions: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. III, p. 483; in the Jena (1568), vol. VII, p. 305; in the Altenburg, vol. VII, p. 328; in the Leipzig, vol. VI, p. 404 and in the Erlangen, vol. 40, p. 38. According to the latter, which brings the original print, we give the text comparing the Wittenberg and the Jena.

***) In the Erlanger here is the text of the IIO. Psalm is printed here, as it is in our Bible. We have omitted the same, as well as Walch, since each time the text of the verse precedes the interpretation.

If you are now seeing it fulfilled and come to pass before your eyes, and thus chat with him about it out of a happy, joyful spirit, as if your heart were on fire and completely overflowing with joy toward your Lord Christ, whom he was waiting for in faith when he was promised to him and was to be born of him.

4. just as Christians also believe (though almost weakly compared to this spirit and faith), but do not presently see or understand that our bodies (after this life) will come out of death, the grave and decay and float with the Lord Christ, much more glorious, beautiful and luminous than the sun and all other creatures 2c. And since we know that our Lord Christ has gone before us and is already reigning at the right hand of God, so that he may also bring us to such glory, we ought to hold this article more strongly and firmly than we do, if we can see it, how the dear holy fathers in the Old Testament have conceived their article of the future Christ, and so joyfully and wholeheartedly waited for it, as if they had no other joy nor comfort on earth, and so much more certainly and strongly believed than we do our glorious resurrection and eternal life; Which, if we also could so surely and cheerfully (expect, and our heart of faith were so full, what should we lack that we should not also make such beautiful, cheerful psalms?

5) But unfortunately, our faith is nothing compared to the faith of these people, that we must leave them the glory that they are our fathers, teachers and masters, and we will be glad that we remain their disciples, and still have enough to do that we follow in their footsteps, even if we could not reach their measure and goal; and may it be enough for us that we may feel and see their spirit, and thereby be aroused a little to also receive a spark of such spirit and faith. Therefore, let us consider and act upon the words of this psalm one by one, and as much as God gives grace, let us grasp and learn from them.

V. 1. The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand 2c.

6) First, when he speaks thus: "The Lord spoke to my Lord" 2c., this is according to the Hebrew language, and with us not so clearly spoken. For they are two different words, both of which we interpret into our German by the word "Lord". Therefore we have distinguished them throughout the whole Bible, so that one is always written with large letters, the other with small letters. 3) The great LORD, which is written here: "The Lord said", is the name, so that only the divine majesty is named, and is not given to any creature. Which, according to the common German language, we would have to say: GOTT hat gesagt 2c. The other (which follows here: "to my Lord") is the word by which we also commonly call a lord in our language, as a householder, or sovereign, or as a servant or subject calls his lord. Therefore he says of two kinds of lords: the first, who speaks as he says, "The Lord spoke," must be the right true God; the other, to whom is spoken, who must be a right natural man, and yet at the same time also true God; as we shall hear.

(7) Now it is known by everyone, even by the Jews, that by the word "my Lord" he means the Messiah or Christ, who was promised to the fathers, and especially to David the king himself, that he should come from him [2 Sam. 7:12], so that it means just as much as if he said, "God has said to my son Christ, who is promised to me. For herewith he looks back to all the promises, which were made both to the fathers and to him by Christ, that he should be and be called a seed of David, that is, his natural blood and flesh. Just as it was clearly said to Abraham [Gen. 22:18], "In your seed (that is, by your natural flesh and blood) shall all the families of the earth be blessed": there he is called a true man, and naturally a child of Abraham. For in Scripture that is called seed, which we call a natural fruit or child. So he is also called "the seed

1) So the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers. Erlanger: "like them".

2) Erlanger: the.

3) In the old editions the **first** is printed "LORD", the other "HErr".

of the woman", Gen. 3, 15, that is, a quite natural child, born of a woman.

(8) Thus it is proved, as I have said [§7], that this Lord, or Christ, is a true man, or of course the flesh and blood of David, that he may and ought to call him his Son, and also to take him as his own, that he (as it is said) may look to the promise. For the word "my" is a word of faith, who takes upon himself the promised Christ, and does not doubt that which was prophesied of this seed, and presents it to him as present, and takes all such great things as he wills to say of the Christ, with the one word into faith, and makes them his own.

Now he does not want to call him his son or promised seed, nor his Messiah or anointed one, but has his pleasure in the word that he says, "to my Lord", so that he shows what and how high he wants to think of Christ, that he is something more and a higher person than a bad son of David; as the Jews and scribes held him, when they asked Christ who he was? [Matth. 22, 42. ff.]

(10) But before we speak of this, let us first see what a heart full of glorious spiritual joy he has over the Lord Christ, of whom he speaks; how low he regards all the glory, honor, power and good that is on earth, and that he himself is able to do with all the world. May he call him his son with all right and to special glory and great honor, both of his tribe and of his person, which also the Scriptures often praise and acclaim in his honor, and praise and cry out the great grace and glory, given to him before all other kings on earth (that Christ should come from his blossom). Now he is silent about all these glories and honors, which of course no man would like to have taken away from him, nor would have wanted to be silent about, and he throws himself down most deeply, and lays aside his crown and majesty, and his paternal name and right, and all that he is and has, and lays it under the feet of this Christ (by this word "my Lord").

011 For he was also with honor a king, and had his crown, and land, and people,

He was, of course, the greatest and most famous in the sight of God, above all kings and lords on earth (although he did not have as much property, power, land and people as many others), because of his honors, so that he was honored by God, who himself crowned him king, established the kingdom, confirmed and preserved it, and graced it with his word and promises, and was also an excellent hero and warlord, with great deeds, fortune and victory; And summa, what is to be praised in a king especially before God, that he may also boast of. He still expresses all this, rejoices and boasts only that he has a Lord, whom he may call his Lord (as promised to him by God and come from him), to whom all things shall be subject, and he himself willingly and gladly makes himself subject to him.

(12) Therefore the Lord Christ does not ask the scribes in vain, Matt. 22:42 and following, what they had of Christ; and when they answer from the Scriptures, that he is the Son of David; which is a great honor, that (as they thought) nothing greater and more glorious should be said of him: for, is this so great (saith he), why then doth David himself in spirit call him his Lord? He is silent about the fact that Christ has it from him (that he is David's son and is called), and boasts nothing of his fatherly authority, royal majesty, wisdom and power, but is glad that he can call him his Lord, and recognize himself subject to him. This must be something high and great, so that he smites and drops all his royal majesty and all that he has to boast of, and thus says: "Let go my crown and glory, my honor and all that I have! This is my honor and glory, therefore I am great, and boast above all lords and kings of the earth, that I have the LORD, who is called "my LORD," as he was promised to me by God and is to come from me [2 Sam. 7:12]. He is to be and be called my Lord, and I love him with all my heart; for he is also much more of a Lord and King, crowned and set up as King by one greater and higher than I and all the kings and lords of the earth. Now, why does he honor him so highly, or what is so highly praiseworthy about this Lord? It is this, he says, because

God said a word about him, so I had him for my Lord, that is:

Sit at my right hand.

13 "Sit down," he says, "on a royal throne, reign, and be Lord and King. Where there? On the throne and in the house of David, says the prophet Isaiah [Cap. 9, 7.] and the angel Gabriel Luc. 1, 32. according to the promise, happened to David. But here he goes much further and higher; he does not say: "The Lord said, sit on David's throne, or, be mine, David's throne heir;" but thus: "Sit on my right hand." That is, by one word, to be exalted, and to be made a glorious king; not above the castle of beggars at Jerusalem, nor the empire of Babylon, nor Rome, nor Constantinople, nor the whole face of the earth, which would ever be a great power; yea, nor above the heavens, nor the sterile, nor all things that can be seen with the eyes, but much higher and farther: Sit thou, saith he, beside me, upon the high throne where I sit, and be thou like me. For that is what he means, to sit beside him; not at his feet, but "at his right hand," that is, in the same majesty and power that is called a divine power.

14 This may be called a king, more glorious and greater than anyone can understand or pronounce, and truly with one short word Christ brought up from the earth above all heavens and exalted (as St. Paul says [Eph. 4:10]). Would it not be enough that he said (as the Jews always thought and still think of him) that he should sit on David's throne and rule in his house, and that his kingdom should become so powerful that all others should fear him, and that he should finally make all other kingdoms subject to him? How then does he so suddenly ascend above all heights that he so soon sets him at the right hand of the Majesty, as high as God himself sits and reigns? I thought he should put him there, where the psalm is made, and of it was said before to David, and let him remain on earth, as a man and king over men, as is written in other psalms about him. But this is far too small for him, that he is a Lord and King over all the kings of the earth, but wants him to be praised, recognized and honored, to be lifted up.

And sitting on high, where God Himself sits, over all the angels, and such a King who reigns not only over all men, but also over heaven, angels, and all that is under God, that even the angels must call Him their Lord, as they do Luc. 2:11.

15 Who then could speak of Christ in this way, and prophesy so powerfully of his ascension and kingdom? Yes, who could grasp and believe such things enough, not only at the time when they were not yet before our eyes, but also now, when this holy prophet has spoken them so certainly and clearly before? This is why he rightly and justly calls him his Lord, that he and all kings and lords, yes, the whole world, and (as the Scripture also says) all angels should worship him. For what are all kings and princes, with all their power and rule, compared with him who sits and reigns in the throne of divine majesty? They are poor beggars and wretched men, who themselves cannot advise, help, or save them, even in the smallest accident concerning this body and this temporal life.

(16) So then, what we both teach and believe about the person of the Lord Christ and also about His kingdom is powerfully founded in this verse, and is powerfully concluded from it. Namely, first of all, that he is at the same time both a true, natural man and also a true God. He must be a true man, as was said above [§ 7], because the prophet calls him his Lord, as the one who was to be born of his blood and flesh (as was promised to him), and to sit on his throne or in his house, and to be a ruling or reigning lord over men in his people; as he himself will subsequently indicate, that he is to reign in a physical place and in the people of Zion. But that he is also truly God is proved strongly enough by these words, that he makes him equal to the Lord of all things, namely, at his right hand, in the same majesty and power that cannot be attributed to any creature.

(17) That he is truly man is easy to believe, and no one would have disputed or denied it if only this thing were said of Christ. But that he was not only man, but also at the same time true, eternal, all-

mighty God is to be believed, then it clashes, and all other faiths on earth separate. For this is the article that is too high for reason and human wisdom, and has always had to stand up and fight against the clever, sharp spirits, and is still blasphemed and ridiculed by Turks, Jews and other otherwise masters of God's word. And the Arians and others have masterfully twisted themselves about this, and want to bore a hole through this article with their glosses and interpretations. But God's word cannot be overturned with twisting and interpreting; it is too clear and too powerful, and stands against everything that is brought up against it by men.

(18) For this reason, the reason is given here, and it has been decided, because it says that this Lord (the promised Son of David, Christ) is seated at the right hand of God, in the place where it is not fitting for a mere man, or even an angel, to sit, that is, on God's own throne or throne; so it is not fitting to say or believe that he is a mere man, or that another creature (as it should be called, as the Arian dream would have it) is under God. For this is strictly forbidden in Scripture, that one should not make any creature like God, nor put any other god next to him, as Isaiah Cap. 44, 6. He says: "I am the first and the last, and beside or apart from me there is no god; whom then will you make like me?" 2c. And the first commandment suffers no other God beside him, but he alone will remain God and Lord over all that is. Because here and elsewhere he makes this Christ himself equal to him, since no one can sit beside God, he must be of the same divine nature and equal to omnipotent, eternal power and majesty. And because he sits at the right hand of God, not only David and all the kings on earth, but also all the angels in heaven must call him Lord and worship him, Psalm 72:11. As they speak to the shepherds Luke 2:11, and are not ashamed to call this infant lying in the manger their Lord.

019 Now he cannot have these things of human nature, or of the flesh and blood, which he has of David; whereof the divine glory would not be given him, that

He should sit at the right hand of God, and be a Lord over all creatures, if he had not been so before by nature and from eternity. For we men are not lords of angels, but they are over us, and we under them. But this one is set over them, and is called by them a Lord. But he who is set apart from and above the angels must certainly be more naturally or essentially God himself. The epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 1, 13.] also shows this, from this verse: "To what angel (saith he) hath he ever said, Sit thou at my right hand?" Because he says to Christ, "Sit at my right hand," which has never been said to any angel, nor can it ever be said; so this Christ must be the true, eternal God. In the same way Christ himself says Matth. 28, 18: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" 2c. If he has all authority, not only over all that is on earth, but also over all that is in heaven, then he must also have authority over the angels and all that may be called God. Therefore also Paul Phil. 2, 9. 10. says: "God has given Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus all their knees should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth" 2c. And 1 Petr. 3, 22: "He has ascended to the right hand of God in heaven, and the angels and the mighty and the powers are subject to Him" 2c. But such power would not be given to him, if he was not like him and the same God.

20. although such sayings are said of the man Christ, after he rose from the dead in the same human nature and ascended to heaven; yet he actually has this because he is truly God by nature, from eternity. As St. Paul also says in Rom. 1, 4, that Christ was powerfully proved to be a Son of God, because he rose from the dead. And here, when he says, "Sit at my right hand," he does not give him deity, but transfigures it, as he is truly, eternally God with the Father, and is now also exalted in human nature to the same glory, so that one must believe and confess that Christ, the man, sits at the right hand of God, and has power over the angels,

and there is nothing in heaven and earth that is not under him. And so both, true man and true God, seated at the right hand of the Father, are called Lord over all creatures, who in divine majesty, and yet also in human nature, rules us mightily as our Lord and King for ever, that we may have all things from and through him. For because he is the Son of God by nature, he has all authority and power with the Father. But because he is truly man, so that he belongs to us, and is also Adam's child (yet without sin) as we are [Heb. 4:15], he has given and bestowed such his authority and all power upon us, as we should be of the same nature and be his brothers and fellow heirs.

(21) This is our doctrine and faith; but to reason and human wisdom, which is clever in it, and seeks to search out and find out all things after its own head, it is foolish and ridiculous, and even vexatious and blasphemous. Hence we see that so many heresies have arisen against it, even among Christians, and both Jews and Turks have always blasphemed and raved against it. For it is not rhyme or reason with such people (who want to judge by reason) that we should say such an abominable thing about Christ, that the one person should be God and man, that is, both Creator and one creature, and that the majesty should descend so low, and walk along in this wretched nature. How can he (they say) who sits above, and is a Lord over all creatures, become a poor man, who serves and is subject to everyone? Item: How do you say that he is God, who is not God either, but a man? Or, how can he be a man who is not supposed to be a man but God? You yourselves say that there is no more than One God; how then do you make two Gods? Yes, you also make two things out of the same One Christ, so that one must not be one, but two, namely God and man.

(22) This is the high prudence of the sharp mind against this article, which we, praise God, also know and understand very well and can find in ourselves as well as others. But it does not apply to the Christians' disputing, researching, cleverness and mastery of our own.

We must not listen to and glorify reason, but God's word, and remain with it, through which alone we have and attain what we know of God and divine things. And not from ourselves, but from Him we must 1) hear and learn what we are to think and believe about Him. For no one knows him better than he himself, and no one can speak so well of him as he himself. Therefore, we should do him the honor and let what he tells us be true, and not try to overpower him and his word with our reason.

23 Since he clearly says here that this Christ, the Son of David, sits at the right hand of God, that is, has the same image, honor, right and power, and yet is no more than one true God, it must also follow irrefutably and be believed that Christ is the same true God, because of the divine essence, and yet another person, according to whom he is and is called the eternal Son of God, and also a true man. But how these things come to pass is not for us to inquire into, nor to know, and we will leave it unexplored and unfounded in this life until we come to the point where we will no longer hold it in the dark word by faith, but will see it publicly [1 Cor. 13:12, 13].

(24) Now this is said first of the person of the Lord Christ, what and who he is. In the same way his kingdom is described, what and how it is done, namely, that it is not a physical or worldly, earthly regiment, as other lords and kings rule on earth, but a spiritual, heavenly regiment, which does not go beyond temporal goods, nor does it concern this physical life, how one should rule and protect land and people, maintain justice and peace, distribute goods, feed wife and child, keep house, cultivate fields, raise cattle 2c. For these things are already sufficiently ordered in the world, by God's order Gen. 1, 28. and given to it all this world's goods, power, wealth, honor, art and wisdom 2c., but about the hearts and consciences, how to live before God, to obtain his grace, from sins and

1) This "we" was inserted by Walch; style m deū alter issues.

It is not a temporal kingdom that must end like all kings and lords have power and rule on earth, but like the Lord and head of this kingdom above in heaven. Summa, it is not a temporal, transient kingdom, which must cease, like all kings and lords rule and reign on earth, but, as the Lord and head of this kingdom lives up in heaven, at the right hand of God, eternally and without end, so he must also rule in the heavenly, eternal being, and give vain imperishable, eternal goods.

(25) Therefore this king, with his dominion and rule, is far above all emperors, kings, and lords that have ever been on earth, or that may yet be; yea, all of them, especially with their power, crown, splendor, and honor, are not worthy to be called against this Lord, and to be called kings or lords. For what is all the world's power, glory, and rule, where it is best, but a short, transient being? For a lord or king reigns forty or fifty years at the longest (which seldom happens), and his dominion seldom endures long to his descendants; and though it stand well for a long time, yet at last it must cease and come to an end, both with lands and people; In addition, all temporal power and government, even if it stands and works at its best, is still a weak, even a rather poor, miserable beggar's kingdom, and no one can ever bring it to work as he would like, but always disobedience, strife and other misfortunes remain. For the people are too wicked and disobedient, and the things too dangerous and often out of the hands of men, and all reason and wisdom too weak and small, that it is nothing else than an old, torn fur, which one must always patch and mend, with great effort and work, and yet cannot help the things to work as they should.

(26) Now all this is done in the things where they are lords, and have power and authority to help with money and goods, and so far as the same reacheth. But when this comes to an end, it is so utterly powerless that no one, no matter how glorious and powerful he may be, could save himself or others with all his goods, power and authority from physical hardship and sickness, or in mortal danger from death for an hour.

even all must despair of all human help, and lie down under a pestilence or fever. But this King is such a Lord, who, though he does not rule with money and goods and outward appearance, yet has all things powerfully in his hand, and his power and authority is an everlasting power and authority, that he rules and is mighty when all men's power and authority cease, wisdom ceases, and can save and help where no man, indeed no creature on earth or in heaven, can help, namely against sin, so that it does not condemn us, against death, so that it does not devour us, against the devil, so that he does not have to hold us captive.

27 Thus you see why David praises this Lord so highly, that he submits to him with all his crown, kingdom, glory and power, and wants to be ruled by him, which he would not be allowed to do, if it were not for another kingdom, power and dominion, neither of which he had before. For after this physical and temporal reign he was 1) himself a mighty lord, and everything that belonged to it had been given to him by God himself, and he was not allowed to receive fiefs from anyone else on earth, nor to be a subject to anyone. But to this king he does fair honor, that he bows down before him and confesses his Lord (although he is his son), so that he has a seat and kingdom where neither he nor any king on earth can reach with any power, namely, to the right hand of God, since everything that is under God must be subject to him, and so he rules, that he redeems from the devil, sin and death, under which all men lie, and no creature can help them from it, and in return gives heavenly, imperishable goods, eternal life, eternal peace.

For this reason also it is said of him in the prophets, that he shall have an everlasting kingdom, whose end shall never be; and Isaiah 9:6 is called by that name, that he is called *Pater futuri saeculi*, Everlasting Father 2c. Which regiment does not go nor stand for the sake of this life, how to make or keep money and goods, or temporal peace, but is to be done that we may have a Lord also after this life, where we shall be helped, that we may have the kingdom of God.

1) "he" is missing in the Erlanger.

not remain in death and damnation. But if we are to be redeemed from death, we must also be saved from the sin and God's wrath, for which death came upon us, and be restored to eternal righteousness and innocence through this Lord, so that we may be God's children and heirs [Rom. 5:12, 18].

29. Now this is a marvelous kingdom, that this king sits above at the right hand of God, being invisible, an eternal, immortal person, and yet his people and people here on earth in this miserable, mortal being, subject to death and all kinds of accidents (which a person can encounter on earth), so that we all have to be buried under the earth and become ashes, and this king's power and authority (which is praised so highly here that it is called an eternal, almighty power) seems to be nothing at all everywhere, because the Christians on earth have nothing better than other people, and are even much more afflicted with all kinds of misery and heartache; not only outwardly by poverty, misery and all kinds of bodily suffering and persecution, but also inwardly, with fear, sorrow and temptation of sin and death; which the wicked do not feel, but can safely despise until the hour comes that it comes into their hands, that, as St. Paul says [1 Cor. 15:15], they will not be able to see it. Paul [1 Cor. 15:19] says, to reckon by this life, we are yet the most miserable people on earth.

30. Since this Lord Christ sits above at the right hand of God, and does not have and lead a kingdom of death, sorrow and misery, but a kingdom of life, peace, joy and redemption of all evil, it must happen that his people do not remain in death, fear, terror, temptation and suffering, but are snatched out of death or the grave and out of all misery, and thus live with him without all sin and evil, just as he also in his own person, when he became man and lowered himself into this wretched nature of ours (as it is now), that he might begin his kingdom in us, and therefore also took upon himself all human infirmities and misfortunes, and for this reason also had to die [Heb. 2, 18.]. But should he as a

If the Lord and King of all creatures were to sit at the right hand of God, he could not remain in death and suffering, but had to pass through God's power, through death and the grave and everything, and sit down there, where he could also create and give such things in us.

Behold, this is the glory of this King over all that is glorious and mighty, both in heaven and on earth, that he is a Lord, not, as others, over land and people, cities and castles, silver and gold, body and goods, but a Lord and King of the eternal goods that are God's own, of peace and joy and all wealth, of everlasting righteousness and life. Although these temporal things are also under his hands, namely all the power and authority of the world, so that he can do with them as he pleases, that all princes and lords must be subject to him, and not reach any further than he wants them to, but especially the devil, death and sin are placed powerfully under his feet, as the following verse will show.

32 To this now belongs the faith that accepts the King, and thus learns to look at this Christ and to certainly believe that he has such a Lord in him, who does not sit idle for himself up in heaven or amuse himself with the angels; but leads such a reign powerfully everywhere, has all hearts in his hand, and truly rules and guides his Christianity, saves, protects and preserves it, and certainly gives such goods to all who believe in him and call upon him; as St. Paul Ephesians 4:8 from Psalm 19 says that he therefore went up and sat down at the right hand of God, so that he can give such goods to all who believe in him and call upon him. Paul Eph. 4, 8. from the 68th Psalm, v. 19, says that he therefore ascended on high, and sat down at the right hand of God, that he might give such divine gifts to men.

But where such faith is to be established and maintained, it is not necessary to look at the outward appearance and nature, nor to follow the dictates of reason, nor the feelings of our own heart, but as the manner and art of faith is described in Heb. 11:1, that he hold fast, and not doubt that which he does not see. For according to our seeing and feeling there seems to be nothing everywhere (as was said before) that Christ reigns so mightily with us, but rather we see and feel the contradiction, and it is nothing but vain weakness.

and powerlessness before the eyes of Christianity, as if it were utterly miserable and abandoned, without help and salvation, oppressed and trampled underfoot by the world, and in addition attacked and harassed by the devil with sin, the terror and fear of death and hell, without which all kinds of other common bodily accidents, journeys and hardships come upon it, more than upon other people. Therefore, such an art of faith and masterpiece must be done here, that he fights and fences against such feelings and senses, and holds on to the mere word, which he hears here, that this Christ (although invisible) is set up above at the right hand of God by God, and shall and will remain there, and rule over us mightily; yet secretly and hidden from the world. For this Sheb Limini [XXXX XX] (sit down at my right hand), because God Himself says it, must be true and remain true, and no creature will overthrow it, nor make it false; so He will not deny it Himself, let everything appear, feel and turn out as it will.

34 You can see this kind of faith in the prophet David, because he speaks so confidently and powerfully of something that was not yet seen or present, but he alone believes it to be future, and thus relies on it as if it were already fulfilled before his eyes in work or deed, and so boldly sets himself up for glory and defiance against everything that would challenge him, that he knows and has such a Lord, who should be his natural blood and flesh, and yet sit at the right hand of God. This is his highest consolation and joy, so that he has been able to withstand all hardships, both outwardly against violence and persecution, and inwardly against the severe temptations of conscience and the sorrow of sin and death, and has thus overcome everything. For his heart has had to stand thus: There is now no more need, come death, devil, world or hell, I will not perish. Let them come, thrusting and tumultuous, whatsoever may thrust or affright, and be as wicked as they will, yet will I keep myself from it, through this Lord. Even if I am oppressed, persecuted and driven away by my enemies and all the world, I have a Lord, who is called my Lord and will be, promised to me by God, who sits higher and is mightier than all of them, and therefore sits so high that he will defend and protect me.

will. Likewise, though sin and the wrath of God afflict me and make my heart heavy and sorrowful, I shall not despair because he also sits above, so that neither sin nor anything else shall condemn me or cast me into hell. Even though death falls upon me and devours me, it does not keep me, but because this Lord sits above and lives forever, I too must come to life again.

(35) So this verse is not only a prophecy or teaching about Christ, but also a confession of his faith, set as an example for us to see what power such faith has, how it makes such a heart and courage that can despise everything on earth, and fear nothing, but joyfully defy the one Christ, who reigns forever, a Lord over temporal and eternal, death and life, sin and righteousness, evil and good. Such faith made this David so merry and full of spiritual joy to sing these psalms, and to boast so defiantly of this Christ, who was yet to be born for a long time. What would he have done if he had lived to see the day when these things were fulfilled and proclaimed to the world, as they are now? For should he not heartily rejoice that his own natural flesh and blood, born of him, should rise so high that he should sit in God's throne, and be declared and worshipped by all creatures right, true God?

36. Although David has this fleshly advantage (on account of his person), that Christ should be born of him in the flesh, which we do not have, we nevertheless have nothing less to rejoice in and boast of the common honor and glory, to which we, as well as David and the holy fathers of the Jewish people, are entitled, that this same one of our flesh and blood (that is, of human nature) is sitting up in heaven at the right hand of God, and wants to be our Lord as well as David's and the others'. For this is the unspeakable, great glory and honor of the human race, that it should be so highly exalted, not lowly in heaven among the holy angels or archangels, which after all is perfectly great for-

The Lord is not only the most holy and lordly, but also the most evil of all. How could the high majesty humble himself more deeply than to honor and lift this poor flesh and blood with his divine honor and power, so that he lowers himself into this nature of ours, and himself becomes a member of the human race? which honor has not been granted to any angel in heaven [Hebr. 2, 16].

37 Therefore it is not surprising that this prophet, David, forgets his royal glory and honor, and does not consider it worthy of remembrance, and only this leads to his highest glory, publicly in all the world, above all glory, honor and fame that may be called there. As if he should say: "I should also boast of great honor and dignity, which God has given me, that he has taken me from the lowly shepherd's estate and from the sheepfolds (as he says in Psalm 78:70, 71), and has made me king and lord of his people, and has given me many wonderful deeds and victories through me; but all this I regard as nothing, for this majesty, crown, kingdom, land and people must all pass away. But this is another glory, above all glory, that it is promised to me that into my flesh and blood shall come and be born of me the true Son of God, and in this flesh and blood shall be set on the right hand of God, the Lord over all. He would gladly pour out such joy and defiance and share it with everyone, so that we too might think and boast with him about this Lord and become as full of joy as he is in his heart.

038 But where are the people who can boast and rejoice in this way? Not because they have great treasures of gold and silver, great favor and friendship, for which the world rejoices and throws up its hands, but because they have Christ as their Lord, seated at the right hand of God, and say, "This is my glory and praise, that I have been baptized into this man, and have been taken and incorporated into the Lord's kingdom, of which David says here, who sits above in the divine majesty, and yet is my flesh and blood, and (as he calls himself) my brother. What is all the world's good, honor, splendor and power?

for a wretched, perishable being, yes, a stink and muck, against this?

(39) Such joy would surely follow if faith were in us as it was in David, and would also bring with it a certain comfort and defiance against all temptation of sin, death, the devil and the world. For whoever believes without doubt that he has the Lord sitting above, who is our flesh and blood, must not despair or despair because of sin. For he did not take on this flesh and blood to condemn human nature, but to save it from sin, from God's wrath and from all the misery in which it had been before. He did not go up and enter this realm to beat those who were baptized into Him and believed in Him over the head, but to represent, forbid and reconcile them to God without ceasing, as the true, faithful and eternal high priest [Rom. 8, 34. 1 Jn. 2, 1. Hebr. 7, 24. f.], as He is described below.

40 So a Christian can also defy death: Though I be buried in the earth, and be turned to ashes, yet have I the Lord above, who is of my blood and of my flesh, who never dieth, and is the life of the world in him, and is become my Lord, that I should not abide under the power of death, nor of the devil, but should live with him; that death cannot strangle so much, but Christ can and will give much more life, as St. Paul saith, Romans 14:8, 9. Paul says Rom. 14, 8. 9.: "Whether we are dead or alive, we are the Lord's, for this cause he died and rose again, that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living." Therefore, though I die, yet will I live; for my Lord liveth, who is Lord even in death; and will not leave me in death, but as he liveth, even so shall I live: as he himself saith Joh. 14:19, "I live, and ye shall live"; item, Joh. 12:26, "Where I am, there shall my servant be also."

41 St. Bernard also had such joy and consolation in his heart (from this article) that he could say: "How should I mourn or despair? my flesh and blood sits above in heaven, he will (I hope) not be hostile to me. This is a quite spiritual, heavenly, divine thought of the

Faith, which can attribute such things to him and boast. For he was also something in the world, rich, noble, learned and holy enough; but before God he knows nothing to boast about nor to comfort himself, except this Lord.

The same is read about the holy martyr St. Stephen in Apostles 7, 56. 7, 56, when he was about to be stoned, how he had this verse in his heart, so much so that it was visibly revealed to him, as he says: "Behold, I see heaven open, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. This is a true vision, which sees nothing but life in Christ in death, which he now sees before his eyes. Then he defies all the raging and fury of his enemies, the terror and fear of death, so that he enters death with such joy as if he were entering life.

(43) Thus, from the beginning to this day, all of Christendom has placed its comfort and defiance in this verse, and has been preserved and maintained by it. For it has never been protected and sustained by any human or physical strength and power, but in contrast, in the highest weakness and lack of strength, against all devils and all the world's anger and rage, only through faith and defiance in this Lord, to whom this Sheb Limini (sit at my right hand) is said, since he has built himself so high and so firmly that he can remain seated before everyone, and still has so much power and strength that he can maintain defiance against their rage and anger.

44. Therefore, as Christians, let us also have such faith and get used to put our glory and defiance, joy and comfort in him when we are challenged, especially because we see how the devil rages and rages against this kingdom of Christ at the last time through his scales, popes, bishops, tyrants, with plagues, chasing away, tortures, murders; In addition, they are plotting so many and various counsels, secret practices, wicked trickery and cunning, that they may be able to overthrow Christ from the throne to the right hand of the Father before he realizes it or understands it. But let them do and try what they can; if they are the people who can make this Sheb Limini wrong and extinguish it, we will gladly give them the glory and the prize.

and soon become one with them and consider them lords of all lords and gods of all gods. But take heed, ye prudent and wrathful lords, that ye lack not art and might, lest ye cause this Lord to sit a while longer with your scorn and reproach, and he smite you down with thunder and lightning, that ye, with others that have been before you, and have also risen up in hostility against him, should be his footstool, as the following verse doth threaten you:

Until I lay your enemies at the footstool of your feet.

(45) This must be a strange and wondrous kingdom, which shall be above all rule and authority on earth, and yet shall be regarded as false and forged, as if all that is praised and said of it were false and forged. For how does it rhyme that this king should sit at the right hand of God, be an almighty God and Lord, and yet be so disposed about his kingdom that he should always have enemies and opposition; not of one kind, but many and various, yes, surrounded with enemies everywhere? as he says more clearly afterwards: "Rule in the midst of your enemies. How is this to be said of such a mighty King and Lord over all creatures, that he must suffer such enemies to be set against him, and show themselves to be enemies? O my dear David, art thou drunken, or mad and foolish? How high do you look, and lift this Lord with one word into the divine majesty above all, and now make him so weak that he must have enemies and be challenged by them, until they all cease so lukewarm?

(46) Now in this, as I have said [§§ 24, 25], he will paint this kingdom with its color, as it is done, that it may be rightly seen, not according to reason and outward appearance, but according to the Word and in faith, and so that it may be called before all the world a wonderful kingdom, both being with and by one another, the highest power and might, and yet beside it weakness and impotence, that it may be called and be God's power and government, who can rule otherwise than all men understand and comprehend.

47 But that we may consider these things a little, let us first ask how it is with the enemies? Whence and how did he come to have enemies, and who are they that may set themselves against him? What cause have they for such a thing? Or, what do they know that they may rely upon to oppose him? What can they do or harm, and why does he allow this to happen?

For first of all, it is ever a wonder that this Lord and King should have any adversaries and enemies. I wept, because he is so highly honored and set by God, and because he is so gloriously praised, that all the world should run to him with joy, and obediently accept this king with praise and thanksgiving, and in all submissiveness, and fall at his feet, as he is set and given to them by God Himself as Lord, and not that he should harm or hurt anyone, but that he should help and do good to everyone. Who would not like to be under such a king? And how can a man be so wicked that he should be hostile to such a Lord and rebel against him? Answer: This is certainly true, if this king ruled with his kingdom or regiment in such a way that he visibly and publicly led in divine majesty and power, and let himself be seen (as he will do on the last day), or, if it was thus recognized and believed, as is said of him here, then without a doubt no one would set himself against him. But now he reigns in his whole government and nature, so that it is hidden from eyes and senses, and is only spoken of in the word, which does not rhyme with human reason and understanding; therefore they also think nothing of it. For this is their nature and manner, that they think of nothing but what they see and understand before their eyes. And such natural blindness is a good beginning to despise Christ and his kingdom and to consider them as nothing, because nothing seems to be seen here that is equal to and in accordance with such power, yes, it seems to be a contradiction, as already said and to be said further on. 49 Moreover, when the word comes that reveals this Christ, and wants to discover or reveal and take away the blindness, then it is first necessary to disagree on the matter.

and the enmity is lifted. For the world does not want to be punished or scolded for being blind and ignorant, and for its things to be nothing, but also wants to be wise and prudent, even in divine matters. Therefore she is displeased and does not like to hear it when God tells her that this king alone is everything in the sight of God, and that no doctrine, no faith, no worship, no life and no work are valid before him, except from and by and in this Lord, and that no one is to be found before him, except under this Lord and in his kingdom. For she makes herself believe that she has wisdom, understanding, and everything she needs to live before God and to please him. And because she sees that this Christ with his words does not compare with her wisdom, but is contrary to it, she thinks she is well justified in acting contrary to it.

(50) And the fact that they may dare to contend against this kingdom also makes the very thing that is said [§33.48], that they consider it a powerless, impotent, and void thing, because it does not appear before the eyes; but on the other hand they consider their own wisdom and prudence, might and power, which fill the eyes, because the multitude and following are great, and they have money and goods, land and people, armor and weapons enough. This makes them bold, proud and joyful, that they boast about it, rely on it and insist on it, and certainly think what they undertake to accomplish; yes, they do not wish them luck before great security. What can this poor, powerless, miserable beggar, or king of deeds, with his miserable, naked, defenseless heap, do? So they confidently run to him and rush to him with all their might, so that at the beginning it looks as if they would push him off his chair so soon. But what the end of it will be, we will soon hear.

51 So we see that it is not bad people who make enemies of this Lord, but the most powerful. Most powerful, and the best on earth. These are the very ones whom the other Psalm, v. 1, 2, calls by name, saying: "Why do the nations rage and the people speak in vain?"

Lords counsel with one another against the LORD, and against his anointed." There you hear them all in one heap. They are called nations and peoples, or country and people, kings, princes and lords, or councils, that is, the great, the mighty, the rich, the noble, the wise, the learned, the holy. And summa, it is all that is called the world, and just the right core, the orderly regime, both spiritual and secular, with everything that belongs to it; everything, everything must be set against this Lord, who is anointed by God and consecrated as king, and all his enemies are called, who are unanimously directed against him, and set together with council and armament, with shouting and raving, and as they know and are able.

52. For they consider that they have good, honest reasons, that they must defend themselves here, and put their power together, namely, because it wants to meet their honor and glory, which they want to have before all the world, also before God Himself, the wisdom and holiness; They must defend and maintain them, so that they may be called and kept wise and wise, holy and pious, and by these rule the world, and do everything without God and his Christ, and in short, remain unpunished, unmastered and unregulated by this king. For that would be too close to their honor, and would not be good for them. Therefore, everything must converge here and help each other with body and soul, with counsel and action, to save their honor and power. Here there is no joking, nor looking through the fingers, but to fight with all force and all seriousness, no diligence, effort nor work spared, so that one does not let this king rule, nor his kingdom get out of hand.

(53) And that they may have the greater appearance of such causes, and stir up and move the people against them, God's name and commandment must come to this, and help them to adorn their cause against Christ, that he may be guilty that this preaching causes disobedience against God, both in spiritual and temporal government; namely, that it reproves the beautiful spiritual being and life that is going on in the world, attacks and punishes the pious and the saints, forbids good works, and puts down divine service; item

disrupt common peace and obedience to the worldly authorities commanded by God, and give cause for rebellion, bloodshed 2c., because it teaches that one should be more obedient to this Lord than to men [Apost. 5, 28. f.].

Here they have the right cause against Christ and his Christians, that they must, because of God and out of his obedience, persecute Christianity to protect his name and commandment and obedience, and thus become God's children, true, living saints, who are driven by necessity, by God's commandment, to fight over your faith, worship and obedience, and to punish the heretics, blasphemers and rebels. And to such appearance and cover they are helped by the very teaching of the Gospel, from which they have heard and learned that worldly authority is God's order and His commandment, that one should be obedient to it, and that it is their duty to handle and protect God's commandment and worship [Rom. 13, 1.]. As they now also thank and reward our Gospel, having learned such things from it, which they did not know before, and thereupon confidently rage and rage against the Christians, and do all that they desire, to God's hurt and displeasure, against His word and obedience; and yet all things shall be called kept according to the obedience of the authorities and God's commandment.

(55) So you see who are the real enemies of this kingdom. And those who want to be called its enemies also turn out to be enemies. For notwithstanding that they are many and mighty in number, and that they attack with great earnestness and try their utmost and best that they know and are able, and do great harm, and would like to do much more, they are also violent beyond measure, bitter and venomous, brewing with great hatred and wrath against Christ, which cannot be quenched nor quenched; not content with 1) cooling their stripes against Christians by murdering, persecuting, driving out 2c., but think to wipe out and exterminate the whole of Christ, and can never be satisfied nor desist. And the less they can do what and how they would like (as they do not want to do), the less they can do what and how they would like (as they do not want to do).

The more they become fierce and evil and rage with vengeance, the more they can and must do it; and yet they do all this 1) under the pretense and name that it must be called a right thing, praiseworthy and well-done, yes, divine zeal and service to God [John 16:2]. 16, 2.] Not that they seek God's honor, or ask for His commandments, but for their honor and glory, that they want to be right, and all their doings unpunished, as if they were lords over God and His word.

56. Now, in truth, they have no just cause for such bitter hatred and anger against Christ, for he never does them any harm or damage with his kingdom, lets them be kings, lords and princes, rich and powerful, and remain in their regiment as they are; He does not interfere with them; he grants them all these things, and even confirms them; he commands them to be subject and obedient; he rejects rebellion and sedition; he does nothing more than offer them his grace and help, so that they may be saved from their blindness, sin and death. This is the guilt that he deserves, so that they become enemies to him and persecute him. What more should he do for them, but to give them all good things, and to save them from all evil? Nor can he have anything to thank them for, but that they have begun to rage and rage against him and all his Christianity, to lust and persecute as they can, as if it were a harmful, pernicious doctrine, which is bad not to suffer, and against which everyone is obliged to help, that it may be subdued and eradicated, when otherwise they can well suffer and tolerate all kinds of error, seduction, blasphemy, immorality and wickedness.

Now such enmity cannot be natural nor human, otherwise it would not be possible that they should be such wicked and bitter enemies without cause, and neither tire of it nor desist from it, especially when they see and discover that this is the right truth and a harmless, wholesome doctrine, as is now, praise God, also evident to our enemies, and to prove it by their own confession. But it is actually the work of the wretched devil; for he is also the right arch- and

God himself says: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. For because he knows that by this seed his kingdom shall be weakened and destroyed, he will not, and cannot, suffer Christ with his kingdom, as much as there is in him, nor be pleased. But since he is a prince, even a god of the world (as Christ himself [Joh. 14, 30.] and St. Paul [2 Cor. 4, 4]. If he holds men's hearts captive in his chains, he drives them with all power and force to serve his will, blinds and stifles their reason with false doctrine, so that they cannot recognize or accept this Christ, and poisons and embittered their hearts with hatred and envy, He makes them so mad and foolish that they do not want to suffer this blessed kingdom of grace, even though the light shines in their eyes so clearly that they cannot deny it and see that they cannot overthrow it: Nor does he drive them so that they run headlong against it, as raging and furious, and so these enemies are and must be nothing but the devil's instrument, so that he storms against this kingdom and gets it.

So you see how many great, powerful, wrathful, harmful and abominable enemies set themselves against this kingdom of Christ. Now, on the other hand, there seems to be no power, strength or might on this side, but only weakness, so that his Christians must be held up to the devil and the world, who are poor, weak, miserable people, against so many and so great enemies and their power and might; They have no armor and defense, but have to serve the enemies, to be tortured and martyred, to be killed and strangled, so that it all feels and looks as if this Christ can and is not able to do anything against such enemies, but has to succumb and fail with his kingdom and small group. This is also the great annoyance to which reason and all the wisdom of the world is offended. For if this Christ were such a king, seated at the right hand of God, then he would have to

1) "they" is missing in the Erlanger.

And if it should be called God's kingdom, he would not let them be so weak, nor suffer them to be challenged and afflicted by everyone (as they always judge and master God's work). How does he allow such things to happen that the pious are oppressed and the wicked float above, since he is supposed to be the most wise, the most pious and the most powerful? Does he know everything and has the power to defend himself, why does he not defend himself? If he is pious and righteous, why does he see through his fingers and let so much injustice happen?

(59) Now the highest justice, power, and wisdom, as if he could not or would not do anything about it, or did not see or know anything about it, must therefore be regarded by the world as foolishness, his power as nothing, his work and deeds as unjust; so that many people, out of such thoughts of their own cleverness, have fallen into this, and still fall into this, that they say badly: either there must be no God, or nothing must be taken care of by men on earth. For it does not rhyme in their mind that a true God, who is mighty, pious and wise, suffers such things; therefore one thing would have to follow, that he either does not know everything, or cannot do it, or will not do it. If he knows and does not do it, he is not pious; but if he does not know, he is not the highest wisdom; if he cannot do it, he is not omnipotent. Now which of these I take from him, thereby have I denied him, and taken away his deity, and made of him a powerless, vain idol, or fool, and mischievous. This is now the faith of the Turks, Jews, and also of our papists, and can be no other with all those who do not know this Christ.

(60) Now why does he do this? Those wise men and masters of God and His word and work do not know or understand this, but in their cleverness and wisdom they become fools [Rom. 1, 22] and deceive themselves. But the Christians are shown this, that they may learn the right divine wisdom, in which he wants to be known. For this is why this kingdom is to be a kingdom of faith, in which God reigns wonderfully, and is not to be controlled by men.

and understand, namely, that he hides his wisdom, power and authority from all reason, and wants to prove it precisely through the contradiction that is called foolishness and impotence in all men, indeed, nothing everywhere, so that it may be known, as St. Paul says in 1 Cor. 1, 25. states: "That which is in his word and works as foolishness is wiser than all men's wisdom and prudence," and that which is in him as weakness is stronger than all men's strength and might; And that he should and will be called in this kingdom a God and Savior, not of the strong, mighty, wise and holy (as reason seeks and paints him), who have no need of this God, but of the weak, unwise, vain, wretched and afflicted poor sinners, who have need of such a God and Savior; And so that He may make them strong in the midst of weakness, righteous and joyful in the midst of the feeling and terror of sin, alive and blessed in the midst of suffering and death, as He says in 2 Cor. 12:10, "My power is made stronger through weakness." This is what he does and must do to these very enemies of his, both contrary to the devil and the world, and to their chagrin, so that they may finally experience what his wisdom, power and might are and are capable of, which they consider powerless and nothing, so that he may overcome their pride and defiance of their own wisdom and might not by great manifest power and wisdom of majesty, but by foolishness and nothingness, and thus disgrace them in their wisdom and destroy them in their power.

So you see, what this kingdom's quality and consecration, and the Christian faith's art is, that we learn (which no other faith or doctrine does not know) that this God is at the same time the all-weakest, and yet alone all-powerful. For of course no other God will and can suffer so much from so many and various enemies, Jews, Turks, papists, mobs (who also want to be God's people and servants), as well as from all the devils in hell, who rage against his kingdom and torture and strangle his saints, and hinder all his will, cause vain disobedience, and do everything that is unpleasant to him. Item, he is the most wise; still everything that he speaks and does must be mocked and ridiculed by all the world, yes, blasphemed to the utmost and desecrated.

will be condemned. Therefore, his righteousness and truth must also be judged and condemned as the highest heresy, injustice and lies.

62) Now this is said of the weakness under which this kingdom is hidden, that he must have enemies on earth, and (as he says here) as long as the world stands, he must always be at war with them. But besides this it is not forgotten about the power and the victory, which he shall have against his enemies, so that no one fears or worries, as if this Christ in his kingdom here on earth must even be defeated, although he is described for his person sitting up in heaven. Here is a word that says: "Until I put your enemies at your feet. There you hear, first of all, that these enemies, with their raging and raging against Christ, should not (as they think and defy) accomplish what they have in mind and would like, but that he should nevertheless remain before them. And not only this, but also that he should become mighty over them, so that they must come under him, and that he should be subject to them and have the upper hand.

63 Secondly, that it may be known what power and might it is, that he should overcome his enemies, he saith plainly, Till I destroy thine enemies 2c. For he does not say, as it should be said of such a mighty king: Till thou lay them at thy footstool, but: I myself (saith he) will lay them down, and cast them under thy feet. Then you hear who the man is who will do it and can do it, namely, that he should be an almighty, eternal power and might, and in short, the divine majesty itself. For I (says he), who have set thee on the throne at my right hand by my sanctifying thee, will also press with it, and these enemies, who lay hold on thy crown, and will not suffer thy kingdom, but will themselves reign, and cast all Christendom under their feet, them will I thrust down, that they must make thee sit, and so rumble with them, that they must lie eternally under thy feet, trodden down, and made ashes.

64 And yet it shall not come to pass that Christ or his people shall do this with bodily force, nor with fist and armed hand shall they set themselves against the enemies. For his kingdom, as it is now said, must be established here on the earth.

The kingdom of God will go and remain on earth in weakness and suffering, but it will still be protected and preserved against all enemies by miraculous power and might, so that it must be said that it is not human or any creature's power and might that this kingdom exists and its enemies are thrown down and overthrown, but without God's help from heaven. Which yet does not appear, nor is it seen, until they lie there under his feet.

For before, while they are at work with their raging and raging against Christ, he does not act differently than if he knew and saw nothing, or could do nothing about it; he lets his son be crucified so miserably and shamefully, and his Christians shed their blood, that these enemies now certainly think that they have already won, and now want to run over Christ and his little group with their feet. But beware, when he is so weak, and God blinks at him, as if he sees and can do nothing at all. For then it is nearest to them that he will disturb them in their best thoughts and highest power, and in the midst of their work seize them in the dice, and with them turn the supreme thing to the bottom, that they suddenly lie fallen to the ground before they look around, and so go with them that in the very thing that they run and storm against him they run and fall themselves down, and just by this are overthrown and laid at his footstool, so that they want to have him fall down and throw him under their feet.

So this victory and overcoming is done, that it is said, without sword, armor and guns, and in short, without all bodily power and resistance of the Christians, the enemies are defeated and put down, only by divine power and miracles. For I (says he here) will do it myself, and so that they need neither armor, nor sword, nor weapons, but shall sit quietly, and do nothing but wait for their office, that they may preach of this Lord and his kingdom, and say how he, the King, sits at the right hand of God, and how the Lord is to be set over all creatures by God. But those who despise it and will not accept it, or who oppose it and persecute it, let them be commanded to me, as they have smelled, and as they have done with their spirits.

[illegible]

mel, also have a footstool on earth on which to set his feet. It does not have to be of common, bad people, but mostly of the high, great heads of the world, emperors, kings, princes and lords, mighty, prudent and wise, so that it may also be according to the glory of this king and his throne.

Therefore we can also be prophets from this text, and certainly prophesy to the present enemies of Christ and persecutors of the Gospel, as both the Turk with his Mahometan, and the Pope with his Antichristian sect and mob, who also have it in mind to throw down this Lord with his throne: that they will neither create nor carry out anything, but shall and must also fulfill this verse, as it has been fulfilled so far, that they must also lay their heads under this Christ. For he will also find some 1) power against them, that he may overthrow them, as he found before. As he can punish his enemies by other enemies, the Jews by the Romans, the Romans by Goths and Wends 2c. Also he will find both, Turks, Pabst and his tyrant, also their destroyer, or even decide the end with them from heaven down, and strike with the last day three, that they all are put at the same time on a heap under his feet. As it is proclaimed in the Scriptures about the Antichrist, that he shall be destroyed without hand, and his end shall be made by the final, glorious appearing and future of Christ [Dan. 8:25, 2 Thess. 2:8].

(71) But let them, our enemies, by no means believe these things, as others have done before them, until they, like them, learn them, and faith comes into their hands; otherwise this prophecy might fail them, and the punishment be averted by repentance. But because they do not want to hear or believe when it has been said to them enough, and are faithfully warned to beware of this little verse, which is called, "Till I be thine enemy," 2c., this is a sure sign that it will be fulfilled in them the sooner, that they will suddenly lie there before they know it. For one sees and experiences how our tyrants, bishops and priests are so un-

1) stho somewhere.

and struggle for it, that they would gladly lead Germany into misery and drown it in blood for the sake of the Gospel. And yet (praise God!) they have so often failed with their murderous plots and treacherous practices, both for the benefit of Christendom and as a warning to themselves, that they should see how God resists them, and resists that it does not have to go as they would like, and they must stand without their thanksgiving this verse (Dixit Dominus) and let Christ sit at the right hand of God. But they have set their minds on tearing through it with their hard heads and deliberately strive for it to go out over their heads. Therefore he must also help them to it, since they want to fall down the sooner without all grace, to become his footstool forever. As they wish, so shall it be done to them, amen.

Seventy-two You may want to ask: Why does he look through his fingers so long, and let such enemies become so many, so strong and powerful, and rage and rage against the Christians so long, that there is no end to it? If only he could soon fight them off, or put an end to all of them at once, so that none of them would have to be any more, or would have to stop immediately. Answer: This is only good for us and for the whole of Christendom. For if he should have struck down the Roman Empire and other enemies in the beginning or all at once and thrown them into the ashes, where would we have remained who were not yet born? Or, if he were still doing it, where would those remain who are still to be baptized? But now it must be (says the Epistle to the Hebrews Cap. 11, 40.), 2) that the saints who were before us should not be perfected without us, or come to glory. Therefore, although this throne has long since been established, and the judgment against the enemies has been pronounced and passed so long before, it must not and cannot be executed so soon, nor all at once, but must proceed slowly and gradually until its kingdom is fully spread throughout the world, and more and more of those who belong to heaven are brought here. When this has happened, then, on the following days

2) Erlanger: "zun Ebräern 12."

Once all the enemies of this kingdom will be destroyed, as St. Paul says in 1 Cor. 15:25 from this verse: "He must reign until he puts all his enemies under his feet. However, it must happen that he always has enemies (as the following verse continues), who storm against his Christianity and do what they can, but no longer than he has measured out the goal, determined the time, and seen the hour in which he wants to put an end to it.

(73) Therefore let no one think or hope that we, who are Christians, will have peace on earth or be rid of our enemies, but let us cheerfully consider and take care that Christianity will always be challenged and persecuted by enemies, and will always have one after another until the last day, not for our sake, but for the sake of our dear brothers who will be born after us and will also come to Christ. Our fathers before us had to suffer for our sake and comfort themselves that we should also come afterwards, so that Christianity would not perish. For this reason they still have to lie under the earth and wait for their final redemption until we also come to them [Revelation 6:11]. Why would we want it better and not suffer for the sake of our brothers, even our own children and children's children? It is better that we suffer for a little while, and that both the Turks, the pope, the tyrants, and all the world exercise their will of mercy on us, than that one of our brothers should be lost or remain behind.

Therefore we should gladly see this, and, if it was not promised beforehand, ask God not to destroy all our enemies at once, and suffer with joy everything they could do to us, with this comfort, that there are still many who will follow us and fill up the number. As also Revelation 6:10, 11 to the souls (lying under the altar, strangled for the sake of God's word, and crying out to God: "Lord, how long will you judge and not avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?") it is said, "that they should rest a little while, until their fellow servants and brothers come to completion, who shall also still suffer death like them. There must be

We will look as he himself looks, namely, at the number that is not yet full, and must be filled daily until we are all gathered together, and in the meantime comfort ourselves that we have set this King as Lord, who has already thrown many of these enemies under his feet, and is always overthrowing one after another, but will finally wear them all out at once. And whether we lay our head, oppressed by them, and with. He will not forget us, but in his time he will bring us up again and set us on high, so that they will be under our feet forever.

(75) For Christianity on earth must be like the Lord Himself [John 15:20], that it must serve the devil and the world, that they walk and tread over it, that it feels and mournfully laments, as Isaiah chap. 54:11 and chap. 62:4. and says, "You wretched and desolate woman, and poor widow, over whom all weathers pass, and everyone steps on your head and runs over you, but I will make you trample again those who have trampled you, and trample them so that they will not suffer from them for a time, as you are suffering from them now, but will have to be trampled by you forever. For as this king's throne is set and abideth for ever, so shall the footstool at his feet be for ever.

But what it is to be the footstool of this king, that they shall know and feel all too well. All those who have written about it say that there will be no more severe torment for the damned than that they will see that they must be eternally separated from God and His chosen ones. And it is to be believed that this will be intolerable to them above all flames and bright embers. But now he says here that they will not be badly cut off from Christ and his saints, and will have no part with them, but will have to lie eternally under their feet before all creatures, because they did not want to suffer this King, whom they should have accepted and kissed with all joy (as the 2nd Psalm, v. 11, says), when he brought them all good and happiness, and claimed them to his eternal glory, but only the more disgracefully forfeited such grace.

and have beaten to death his Christians who told them about it, and have chased them out of the world.

(77) St. Paul, 1 Cor. 15:25, 26, has considered this text more sharply, and has further interpreted these words "your enemies," namely, that the enemies of Christ or of Christianity are called not only the devil and the world, but also death, which he calls the last enemy, and says: "The last enemy to be destroyed is death. But death comprehends in itself all that causes death, that is, both sin and the law, which stirs up sin and drives it into the conscience so that it becomes powerful to kill, as St. Paul also says there, v. 56: "The sting or spear of death is sin, but the power of sin is the law."

For since this Christ is and shall be a Lord and King of righteousness, life, peace and comfort, it must follow that he considers everything that is opposed to it, or hinders us from it, as sin, death, terror of the law, discord and sadness of conscience, to be his enemies and adversaries. For all this is also the armor and weapons of the archenemy, the devil, that he may storm against this kingdom, and his own work; as he is called in Scripture a master of death [Heb. 2:14], and all his power and dominion is nothing else, but that he lead men through sin to death, both in body and soul. Therefore Christ, in order to destroy the devil's power over his Christians, must also put an end to death in the flesh, as he is already doing to them spiritually, so that they may overcome him through faith and take hold of life in him until the last day, when he will cast him out altogether, so that people may boast and defy death and hell [1 Cor. 15:55]: "Death, where is your sting? Hell, where is thy victory?" as he says in the prophet Hosea [Cap. 13, 14.] says: "Death, I will be thy death; hell, I will be a poison unto thee" 2c.

79 Therefore note here for comfort that such enemies are not called our enemies or the enemies of Christendom, but the enemies of the Lord Christ; "your enemies" (he says), although they actually attack and strike Christendom, so that it must be plagued by them and suffer. For Christ himself, who is above

They must now leave him unchallenged, and will not be able to harm him, much less tear him down from his throne; but they are not called our enemies, and they truly are, but his enemies. For that the world and the devil assail and afflict us is not because of worldly things, nor because of our merit or demerit, but only because we believe in this Lord and confess his word; otherwise they would be one with us, and be satisfied before them. Therefore he must show himself against them, as against his own enemies, and accept everything that happens to every Christian, whether of the devil or of the world, terror of sin, anguish and sadness of heart, torture or death, as if it happened to him. As he also speaks through the prophet Zachariam, Cap. 2, 8: "He who touches you touches the apple of my eye." Item, Matth. 25, 40.: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." And to Paul, when he went to Damascus to deliver the Christians bound, Apost. 9:4, he says from heaven, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Item, v. 5: "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest."

80 Therefore, whether we feel the terror of sin, anguish and sadness of heart, torment and death, we should know that these are not our enemies, but the enemies of our Lord (who is our flesh and blood), and so look upon him as being an enemy to such of our enemies, and comfortingly turn them away from us to Christ: Knowest thou not who the Lord is, who sitteth on the right hand of God, to whom thou art already spoken and judged to be the footstool of God? Go and try what you are able. You may well fight and bite me, and you must allow yourself to attack and scratch me; but you shall not win anything against me, because my Lord is set above your head, so that he can and will trample you underfoot. For he has not overcome all such enemies for his own person alone.

and threw them under themselves (as they attacked him first and foremost in his own body and soul and caused him such pain when he wrestled and fought with them that he sweated mild blood [Luc. 22:44],

But in the same he has also overcome us, and taken from us all their right and power, so that the devil, death, the law, and all hell have as little right to us who are in Christ as they have to him, and because they challenge and afflict us on this account, they are only the more indebted to Christ, and he has the more right to throw them under our feet.

But all these things are conceived and begun here in faith. For in our feelings and in this life we have not yet overcome them (otherwise we would neither fear nor be terrified of them everywhere, but cheerfully despise them), but must suffer that they are still strong in us, and do all harm to us. But faith must keep the field on this Christ, who sits above, and already has them in his power, so that they may not overcome us nor bring us under themselves, and on the last day also bodily and visibly redeem us from them, and make them manifest that they must be his footstool for eternity.

In this verse, then, we have briefly and abundantly stated both who this Lord and King is, what power and authority he has, and how his reign or rule is done; which is Christianity on earth, what and who it is, and how it is done, namely, that it should exist and remain forever, as long as the world stands, because Christ sits above, contrary to the world and the devil; as we then say in faith, "I believe a holy Christian church," 2c., but yet miraculously, and by secret divine power, is protected and preserved under the cross and suffering; and that this is actually Christianity, which suffers persecution for the sake of this Lord's name, faith and confession, and has the devil and the world as enemies on its account; that one does not make such a kingdom out of it, nor does one seek such a church, so as to rule bodily on earth, with external, worldly power, as the pope has led and has claimed and praised for such a regiment of the church; or, as the Anabaptists and such erroneous spirits dream, as if such a church should be brought together before the last day, where vain pious and Christians (as before all enemies through them also

bodily redeemed) should reign peacefully without all resistance and contestation. For this text clearly and powerfully says that as long as this Christ reigns on earth, enemies will remain forever, and it is certain that death will not be removed until the last day, when all his enemies will be removed at once.

V. 2. The scepter of your kingdom the Lord will send out of Zion.

83 In this verse he now describes where and in which place, and by what means or in what way this king is to begin and lead his kingdom. For since it is said that he shall reign among men on earth, where also his enemies are, it is necessary to show a place where his people are, where his kingdom is to be found or met, and by which it is to be recognized. For there must not be a lord or prince without a country; and, if he should reign on earth, he must not make it so secret and hidden that one should not see nor know where he reigns, but must be done in such a way that one knows who belongs to his kingdom and how one may come to it. Therefore there must also be some outward sign and way, so that it may be recognized: who else could know something about this kingdom, or come to it? Yes, how could it have enemies and be persecuted, if they neither knew about it nor learned about it? Now, above all, the hearts and consciences of the people who waited and hoped for this king and were to accept him, had to be assured by God where they should look for him and where he would show himself, so that they would be sure of the things and not miss, nor accept a false Messiah for the right one.

Therefore he says: "This is how it will be, and this will be the way and a certain sign, that your and our true God ("the Lord") will send or send out the scepter of your kingdom out of Zion, that is, out of this place in Jerusalem, where King David reigned, to whom also the promise was made clear and plain, that Christ would be born out of his flower and reign on his throne [2 Sam. 7, 12]. Therefore also God from the beginning has given these

He chose the place for it, even set apart the whole Jewish people from all the other nations of the earth, and placed them in this land, and instituted and established the whole priesthood and their worship for it; and in short, all that he did among them was done for the sake of the coming of Christ, that a certain place might be known where to wait for him.

Thus it is prophesied here in the summary, that first of all the Lord Christ should appear bodily in this place, and be present in his own person, and thus begin his reign there, according to the promise made to King David. Which he also hereby touches and indicates that it was thus said and decided by God that he should reign on his throne, and after that that he should spread his rule everywhere in the world by sending out the scepter, by which he should lead his rule and direct everything.

By giving this kingdom a scepter, he shows that it is to be an obvious regiment and an outwardly recognizable sign in which this kingdom will walk and stand. For just as the scepter is a public sign and document of royal or judicial rule and authority, so also this king shall bear a scepter, which may be seen openly and thereby recognize his kingdom.

But he clearly adds that it should be such a scepter that is sent out or goes out, that is, does not stay in one place, but goes on and on and comes. Now messenger runners belong to it. For if it is to be sent out and go forth, there must be people to carry or guide it, and to carry it on and on. So that it is not a stationary but a running scepter, and yet the beginning of such running or going out is to be to Zion or Jerusalem.

Therefore, this scepter is nothing else than the public preaching ministry, which the Lord Christ Himself began and then commanded to be extended through His messengers, the apostles and their descendants, until the last day [Ps. 19:5, 2 Cor. 5:20]. In this is his whole kingdom and regiment, as much as it can be seen outwardly and he can be seen in it.

can grasp. For he does not show or signify anything else here by which this king is to rule, except this scepter alone, and there is to be no other outward sign or emblem by which his kingdom may be known. For above

64] Enough has already been said that he will not rule with the sword or with bodily power and authority (like worldly kings and lords, in their regiment), but that just such worldly power and rule will be set against him. But he must also have a power, by which he rules and brings forth and maintains his kingdom. This is to be done only through the oral word or the ministry of preaching, so that it may resound among the people from this king and thus come into the hearts, so that he may be recognized and accepted.

89. But that this should happen is God's work and power, so that such a scepter, both of them, is sent forth (that is, the preaching of Christ continues and is spread) and is also accepted by the people that they are subject to and obedient to this king, although the power and authority of the world is opposed to it. Therefore he also speaks here: The Lord will send out this scepter, so that he himself will be present through his divine power and might, against the devil's and the world's fighting and raging, so that it will go and run unchecked and unobstructed, wherever and however far he wants. Now such a scepter is no more than the mere word or oral sermon, and a bodily voice; that is the armor and armor only, such mighty kingdom and power to approach, to increase and to maintain. Truly, a poor, weak, even futile armor, as it seems, against the power and authority of the world; and yet by it all that belongs to this kingdom is to be done and accomplished, that it may go and continue everywhere, that it may stand and penetrate against the enemies, and be subject to them (as the following part of this verse further says). For it has a strong backer and protector behind it, who drives it and holds it, who is called "the Lord"; he has strength and power enough against all devils and the world, and must have no other power, armor or weapons for it, but this sent out scepter, that is, the oral word or preaching ministry.

90 Therefore, he also calls it a scepter.

of his kingdom, or of his power, *sceptrum potentiae*, that is, by which he shall rule mightily and powerfully, that it may be called a power or strength of God (as St. Paul also calls the gospel Rom. 1, 16.), both, against the enemies, of which 77 ff. is said, and also with his own. For by this scepter, as 89] is said, all things are directed that are to be done in Christendom, concerning the regiment of the Lord Christ, which is done very much differently from all other regiments on earth.

91. For he sets this very word, "the scepter of your kingdom," in distinction from all others, as they are also called, and gives to understand that he speaks of a new regiment, which does not go in a worldly way, like other lords and princes, or also like Moses' regiment, which must be driven and maintained with the sword and the fist, or with terror and dread of punishment; And what is to be preached or taught there, and done or lived, and by which it is to be protected, endure and remain, all this has already been ordered, and is in progress, so that this new king, nor the sending forth of his scepter, is not needed for it. But here a new one is to begin and be set up, namely such a scepter, which does not say, nor order or command from the outward, bodily being and doing, nor is to rule with bodily compulsion, nor, like Moses, with terror and driving of the law, but only a word or a sermon that proclaims how we are to be saved, that is, redeemed from sins and death, and brought to eternal righteousness and life through this Lord and King, to which no worldly rule nor even the law of Moses can help us.

For this reason this scepter has the price and title, Ps. 45:7, that he calls it "a straight or true scepter," as a beautiful white stick, most straight, equal and bad, without all branches and knots. This alone is the price of this preaching of the gospel. For such good, straight, equal, and well-ordered law is not to be found on earth, and all men, no matter how clever, wise, and highly learned they may be, are not able to establish it, so that there are not bends and knots, that is, various branches and twigs.

to break. For we also see in the Law of Moses, which was given and established by God, that Moses himself and all the prophets complain about it, that it would not work as it should, nor would it work among the people for which it was given. And lords and princes, councillors and all those who have to govern, have experienced that their law and order, which have been set up and made in the best way, still do not work as they would like, and need constant mending and tinkering, so that they can bring it about, and there are so many cases (which cannot be grasped or measured with laws, nor can they be known and seen beforehand), where the law must be bent and directed somewhat, according to which it sometimes wants to suffer the necessities of things and dealings.

For it can happen that the law wants to be too strong, and thus injustice or harm would be done, where it should be kept so tightly and exactly as it is set, that it must give way or ever be alleviated. Just as builders must do when they cut away only the roughest part of a tree or timber, and not allow themselves to be mistaken whether it is not straight and bad everywhere, and whether some chips or knots of branches remain, if it is only otherwise according to the measure or guideline. Or, like the masons, they do not pay attention to whether one or two stones in the wall go out too far or make a bend, if only the main wall conforms to the measure and lead and remains in the right direction. For the sake of such individual branches or bends (if one often cannot improve), one does not have to throw away the whole tree or slacken the construction.

(94) But such infirmities and defects are not here in this kingdom, but is even a like right cord, and hath no bend nor crook, and maketh all things straight and true; for it is called not our, but God's rule, or rod and scepter, and such law and righteousness as is Christ's, and is not in our doings or wisdom. For even if we ourselves were Moses, or David, or prophets, and were to make law and justice, and rule the people with it, nothing would come of it, for such coarse, uncut trees, full of boughs and knots, even if we were to forest-right and beat at it for a long time, and the cord so good, would not be able to be used.

than it could become. For we are too coarse, uneven pieces of wood and blocks, and in human life and being there is no other way; sometimes the cord must give way to the tree, and many things must be done that should not be, lest they be spoiled. But this rule and measure is on another, who has no defect, bend or fault, and his word is such truth and righteousness that it cannot be mended or improved, it goes straight through and makes a straight line without any bend or crookedness. For it is thus said [Marc. 16, 16.], "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Item [John 8:51], "He that keepeth my word shall never see death." In short, everything is placed on this Christ, so that no one may look for it in Himself or elsewhere, nor complain that it is too difficult or too much for him, that he cannot keep it, or that he must have something else.

95. summa, all other righteousnesses stand on our life and works; "whoever does these things (says Moses [3 Mos. 18, 5.]) will live by them" [Luc. 10, 28. But it is the tree with the coarse branches that rhymes nowhere according to the standard, and as one does it, so it will not go right; as Solomon also complains in his Ecclesiastes [Cap. 1, 14. 15.] everywhere; and even if one has worked long and done much, yet nothing is helped for the conscience, nor is the heart satisfied. But here, when God Himself takes it in hand and attacks it, and preaches to us, not of our works, but what He wants to do for us, proclaiming His righteousness, which is grace or forgiveness of sin through Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, all things are made right, so that we become competent and skillful for His kingdom, and such men as serve Him and are useful for all good.

(96) For this reason also such a building grows and continues (as he says here that this scepter is sent forth and runs), and is active and powerful, so that it creates and accomplishes what it is supposed to accomplish, converts and changes hearts, so that they cling to this King Christ, are voluntarily subject to him, and submit to him.

No other power or rule on earth could do this. For no kingdom has ever been brought and spread without sword or war and coercion, only by sending the scepter, and no country or people have ever willingly submitted to a foreign lord or king of their own. So also Moses with his law and regiment was never able to bring it further than among his people, the Jews, that it is neither accepted nor kept by the Gentiles until this day.

97 Therefore it cannot be understood by the same, what is said here and everywhere in the prophets [Isa. 2, 2. 11, 10.] that the Gentiles should fall with multitudes to this people; item, that the city of Jerusalem should become so great that its walls should stand at the end of the world; but this is it, as fact and experience testify, that this kingdom of Christ (begun in Zion or Jerusalem) is spread throughout the world, and this king, born of the Jewish people, is accepted everywhere, only through this word of the gospel preached by the apostles, which has gone into all the world, and is still going on, as the 19th Psalm says: "Their cords are in their mouths. Psalm, v. 5, says: "Their cord goes out into all the earth, and their speech to the end of the world"; and God makes this scepter or preaching ministry so powerful that thereby the hearts are torn out of their blindness and the devil's power, and brought to the right knowledge and obedience of God, that they become righteous, pious, holy and blessed, which neither Moses' law nor any other teaching could accomplish before.

For here he has established such a regiment, since he himself is present, and himself leads and drives, that it goes as it should go, as Ps. 22:32 says, "that one should preach his righteousness to the people who are to be born, that he should do it"; since it should once be said: Dominus fecit, since he himself is master, and (as one speaks) himself is the man. For what is done by others, or by command, is never done rightly; but what the Lord himself does, that goes and stands to be called done, and must be said to be God's work. Before that, he sent Moses and others, commanding and ordering many things to be done;

and yet nothing was done. Therefore I will come myself once and do it myself. How? By placing his Son Christ, with him of divine, omnipotent being, and by letting him shed his blood, die and rise again, and by preaching himself and giving the Holy Spirit from heaven, so that it may be preached and accepted strongly to the end. This is not the work of Moses or of any man, but his own. This is how it will be when he himself preaches and drives the preaching, and also does and creates what he preaches.

Notice, however, that he says that such a scepter should go out from Zion. For this is also such a necessary text as is to be found against all the rotten and erroneous spirits of the devil, that God hereby ordains a certain place on earth where this preaching of the gospel shall begin, and binds the ears and hearts of all men to know which is the right doctrine or word of God, and not to gape or flutter to and fro, nor to say, our preaching and worship in Assyria or in Babylon, or as the Jews said, in Samaria and Bethel 2c., is also right, because we have the same God, and sit under the same heaven, under which you dwell. As now Mahomet's mob boasts, "We worship the true, one God, who created heaven and earth; just as the Jews also boast of the same true God who spoke to Moses 2c.

100 But here let us ask: Where did such preaching or faith come from? Is it also the teaching (of the apostles) sent out from Zion by this King who sits at the right hand of God, of which the prophets proclaimed before, and of which Christ himself commanded his disciples after his resurrection, saying Luc. 24, 47. 48.: "You shall be my witnesses to the end of the world, preaching repentance and forgiveness of sins in my name among all nations, and beginning these things in Jerusalem"? Not in Bethlehem, where he was born, nor in Nazareth or Capernaum, where he was brought up and lived, not one here and another there, but the preaching shall go forth publicly from Jerusalem.

It also happened that the Holy Spirit was sent down from heaven and appeared in no other place than there. For he did not send forth such preaching in a corner or in an uncertain place, but among the people, and in the place where the king David (to whom Christ promised) had his royal throne; not secretly or among a few, but by public preaching and visible manifestation of the Spirit. Now no other doctrine has gone forth from Zion than that which we have and preach in the four evangelists, and preached by the holy apostles.

101. Therefore this is the touchstone for judging all doctrine, that one may take heed and see whether it is this doctrine which is spread out of Zion through the apostles, or not. As for the doctrine of Mahomet with his Turks; item, the doctrine of Pope and his monks, we should and can cheerfully condemn it, because it does not come from Zion, nor from the Gospel, but from their Alkoran or decree, or from their own heads and dreams. Likewise also our Jews, who reject this Christ and his apostle's preaching, and now seek and hope for another Messiah.

102) Therefore, all other spiritualities are rejected, which seek and pretend special enlightenment and secret revelation from heaven, besides the common preached word of the gospel, when the apostles themselves preached nothing else but this public sermon to the people, which was commanded to them from heaven to preach in all the world until the end [Matth. 28, 19. Marc. 16, 15]. That is why they are also called apostles (as the word "send" is used here), that is messengers, or in very old German, messenger (therefore they are also called twelve messengers [2 Cor. 5, 20.]), as they did not produce their sermon by themselves, but received it through the evident sending and command of the Holy Spirit, and preached it to the world. Therefore we are to remain in this alone, and neither hear nor accept any other doctrine or preaching; for this alone (as [§§ 94. 95] said) is the right doctrine, which gives right understanding and comfort to the heart, and makes just and blessed in the sight of God.

Thus you see how this king's rule is done, who sits at the right hand of God in an invisible being, but still visibly rules and works on earth through outward, visible signs, which are primarily the preaching of the gospel and the holy sacraments, item, the public confession and fruits of the believed gospel. These are the true signs by which the kingdom of the Lord Christ and the Christian church can actually be recognized and met, namely, where such a scepter goes, that is, the preaching of the gospel, which was carried into the world by the apostles and which we received from them. Where this is had and held, that is certainly the Christian church and the kingdom of Christ, however small or few such a group may be. Again, those who do not keep and practice these things, or even persecute them (as the papal authorities do), are not to be considered the Christian church, nor are they to be heard, even though they most gloriously and defiantly use the name and title of it and boast that they are the heirs of the apostles' chairs. For they do not speak the same word and preach the same sermon; therefore their boasting is not valid and will not help them, but rather condemn them for sitting in the place and office of the apostles.

Zion" or Jerusalem was also the place chosen by God for this scepter and kingdom of Christ to go out, and had the glory that all the Gentiles had to receive it from them. But since they did not want to accept or keep the word that God gave them first of all, but persecuted it, and drove out and killed the apostles, God also reversed it with them, so that both the place and the whole people were devastated and rejected, and all their defiance and glory was taken away from them. And yet the same true word and gospel that came out of Zion remains until the last day. Thus God also preserves His Church, which was planted by the apostles and has come down to us from them, and yet rejects and condemns the Pope and his followers, even though they possess and hold the same See.

Rule in the midst of your enemies.

Here he shows what kind of power and authority this king's scepter is supposed to have, and he calls it the king's scepter.

the land and people where it will come, and where he will lead and exercise his regiment or rule. For he shall "rule" mightily by his scepter, and in addition he shall exercise such rule "among his enemies". Not only does it say (as in the first verse above) that he shall have enemies, so that his kingdom shall be contested from without, as by strangers, but also within and among those where his kingdom goes, there shall be enemies who shall set themselves against him. Help God, what kind of regiment will this be? What lord or prince could rule in his kingdom or principality, if not only strangers and neighbors, but also his citizens and subjects were to be hostile to him, and he could not provide himself with anything other than all unfaithfulness and wickedness? Now it says here not otherwise than that this king shall rule and reign, not outside nor beside, but "in the midst of his enemies," so that he shall be surrounded with enemies, and in the midst of the ring all shall be full of enemies, and sets no other sign where Christ shall reign, and where his church shall be found, but among enemies. Who would seek such a thing here, or believe that it would thus stand and be preserved?

106. The world praises the Turks' and Pabst's regiment, since it is quiet and they rule in peace and obedience, feared and honored by their subjects; as has happened until now, when a powerless priest or monk could, with a small piece of paper, not more than a finger long and wide, enforce and compel all lords and princes, however proud and powerful they were, as he only wanted, and no one was allowed to publicly protest against some Plätting 1) nor to harm a hair of his head, because he wanted to be cursed under hell, and also be deposed and chased away from lands and people. This was truly a beautiful, delicious rule for the world, and there is no better one for it, because God punishes one bad guy by another.

But now, when the gospel has been brought to light and is running again, everything is stirred up and agitated with hostility, just like the waves when Christ was sitting in the ship [Matth. 8, 24], and all the world complains about discord, strife, rebellion, and the like.

1) Plätting plate carrier, monk.

and all kinds of troubles, blame all this on no one but the dear Gospel, and thus make this doctrine highly embittered, blasphemed, and detestable to everyone, as if nothing else but such vain misery had come from it, which had never been before. And now also princes, lords and noblemen, who are above all good and freedom, so that they are all free of papal coercion, plagues and terror, and have also become rich from the gospel, thank him for persecuting both preachers and the doctrine, and would gladly even exterminate them, so that they, without all gospel and God's word, would only live and do what they desire. Well, what is to be done about it? The gospel must suffer this, for the prophet has clearly proclaimed here that this king and his kingdom would have to reign in the midst of enemies, and that he would set this as a sign: Wherever this scepter or message comes and goes, there will be hostility and resistance everywhere, both from without and within, and so (as the old Simeon prophesies over the infant [Luc. 2, 34.]) this Christ must be a sign or mark that is opposed, but without all his guilt.

(108) For what is it that one cries out in such a hostile manner, 1) "Wherever the gospel goes, strife, discord, and rebellion arise? Who sows such things but the devil and his comrades? But what is this sermon for, or what can it do that the devil and the world are so wicked? What does it do that one could justly blame him, and therefore someone should be hostile to him and persecute him? Nothing, except that it wants to bring people out of their darkness and blindness to the right knowledge of God, and shows how one should truly be rid of sin, saved from death, God's wrath and all evil, become eternally righteous, alive and blessed. Do no harm or damage to anyone, neither to body nor goods, let all regiments, offices and estates on earth go and remain in their essence, unhindered and unweakened, yes, confirming and

To honor them means to be obedient to them and to keep peace, even to suffer injustice and violence, so that no one can have any cause to complain about this teaching. What then shall it do that thou wilt not suffer it? Is it because of this that you have caused strife and rebellion, that you rage and rage against it without any cause and right, as a senseless devil?

Yes, say now our clever ones: We do not persecute Christ, nor the gospel; for we are also Christians, have the holy Scriptures and the gospel, and want to keep the Christian church and faith, and it behooves us not to suffer the heretics and apostates and disobedient 2c. Here is first great holiness, that under the appearance and name, as of the Gospel and Christ's friends and lovers, they can persecute Christ and his Christians. Yes, the world has now become so pious and holy that no one can be found whom one may call an enemy of the gospel and of Christ, or punish with God's word, even though they prove themselves to be the worst enemies by deed, chasing away and persecuting pious preachers and innocent people who have done nothing but believe and live according to Christ's word and command; make the churches and preaching stands empty and desolate; want nothing preached without what they like to hear; believe and live like the Epicureans and swine, and want to do everything they desire, freely, unpunished and unhindered; and yet want to call all obedient to the holy church, pious, Christian gentlemen and friends of the gospel.

I have also heard one of these excellent, holy men who said that people were being wronged, that no man had been hostile to the Gospel. O excellent friendship! How could the devil come to the point, but that he might persecute the gospel under such pretenses, torment and murder Christians, and then wipe his mouth, be beautiful and holy, and be called a friend of the gospel and of Christianity, and if he were punished for it, would still have the right to rage and rage, cry and complain, that one was doing him wrong, and speaking against the Christian church, one was attacking the authorities, and (as some say, if one were to ignore their public

1) "feindlich" as an adverb occurs in Luther only in the meaning of vkUeinentkr, gar sehr, (Dietz). Cf. St. Louis edition, vol. XVIII, 1392; vol. III, 161, Z16. id16.Col. 208, 829. id1ä. Vol. VIII, 1002, tz 2.

What should they do? Should they be ordered to believe against Christ and the Word, and live and rage as much as they want? Yes, that is what they should be ordered to do, that they should believe and live against Christ and his word, rage and rage as they wish. And we should not consider them enemies, but be called the Lord of mercy, and condone their wickedness with our silence; or if we did not, we would have to bear the guilt of causing enmity, strife and discord.

But such let them go. For that they are enemies of the Lord Christ and his kingdom does not bear much witness; their own actions prove it all too clearly. And indeed, they do it so roughly that they (praise God!) have also almost lost the pretense. For they themselves must confess that our doctrine is right and the truth, and must now be ashamed of their former doctrine and nature. And yet they are so desperately wicked that they run headlong against it, and will neither hear nor suffer the evil, and afterward blame the gospel for causing trouble and misfortune, which they themselves do. But so it goes: what the devil and the world can do evil, the dear gospel and the pious Christians must have done.

112 But I say this so that one may not be surprised or astonished at the common anger against the gospel, which both the wise and the unwise are now blowing and crying out. What is the meaning of such a misguided nature, discord and rumor? Before, there was such a beautiful peace and a fine, quiet life. Could one not preach so that such disruption and indignation would not arise? Come on, what are you talking to me about? Talk to this David about it. If he had said that his kingdom should be among friends, we would gladly have seen it. For we also would gladly trust that peace would be everywhere, and that everyone would accept the gospel, so that we would not suffer persecution. But what is lacking? Unless such things cannot be obtained from the world, and it will not let us have peace, but we must take nothing but enmity for love and friendship, and strife and persecution for peace. Who can have peace longer than his neighbor wills? That is why quarrels and

The Christians must neither give advice nor do anything about it, but suffer alone, and bear the blame for it, being called disobedient and rebellious.

There is no one but the devil who does this in the world, but the true arch-enemy of Christ and Christianity, who cannot suffer his lies and wickedness to be attacked and weakened by the gospel. Therefore he must rumble and stir up everything, make hearts bitter and full of fierce hatred against Christ, and fight with all his might and power, as much as is in him, so that no one will come to Christ and be saved.

(114) There are now some smart people who have started to mend things, want to advise and settle disputes, and pretend that one should give way and give in on both sides. We let them do and try what they can, grant them the effort; but if they make the devil pious and one with Christ, they are the first. But I think that such patchwork (as Jesus tells Sirach in 22, v. 7) is like patching up broken pieces. There have been many cobblers who have done this, but they have worked in vain, and both wire and stitch have been lost. In other matters, which concern our work, or ceremonies and such outward things, one may compare and patch up what one can; but as far as the faith and Christ's kingdom are concerned, where one wants to bend his scepter and make it uneven, he wants neither better nor patches. And even if one subjects himself to it, he only makes it worse by losing it; for this scepter should and must remain whole and straight, without any breaks and gaps, as the rule and measure by which one should believe and live.

There is no need for them to look at things only from the outside, as they are before their eyes, and what we are and do, since they should first see what the thing is and what it is. If it were man's doing and man's action, and if it were in our power to do and not to do in this, as in other matters of the world and government, then I would also confidently advise and help with defense and punishment, so that one would have to become one in these matters. But because we

hear and see that it is the kingdom and scepter of this Lord who sits at the right hand of God, and God calls him to rule among his enemies - who are we to master and teach this Lord to yield and give way to his enemies, the devil and the world? It is not said that he, but all the world, yes, all creatures, should yield to him and let him rule, or, if they do not want to, they should lie under his feet forever.

Therefore, do not swear to such a patch, and let him do it; he will see how to keep his scepter straight. But if we do not accept it, and if our nature, rule, order and peace are torn apart because of it, we must not blame or thank anyone but ourselves. Christians should not be afraid of this, nor fall away from Christ, if we see such trouble, but rather be strengthened and comforted by it. For it is not an evil sign, but the very emblem of the kingdom of Christ, when the devil thus begins to rage and to rumble, and drives and incites the world to rage and to rage, where this preaching of Christ is concerned, that he alone is the Lord and Savior, that they persecute and murder men with sword, fire, water, 2c., for no other cause, unless they confess this Lord and are obedient to him.

The devil is not to be blamed for this, for he does not like it when his power and obedience are weakened, and he has to suffer that a stronger one comes over him (as Christ says Luc. 11, 22), and takes away his armor 2c.; this cannot happen peacefully, nor without rumbling and unrest. Therefore he rumbles and rumbles, and defends himself, because he can; and if he can no longer, he cries out about disobedience and riot. But it is right. For this is why Christ is a Lord and "came to destroy the devil's kingdom" (says the Scripture [1 John 3:8]). Therefore he himself says Matth. 10, 34. ff: "You should not think that I came to send peace on earth; I did not come to send peace, but the sword", and so "that the son is against the father, the daughter against the mother, and a man's enemies must be his own household".

118. what can be used for greater discord and

For if not only one country, one city, one citizen and neighbor is against the other, but in one house, father and son, mother and daughter are against each other, and a man must separate from his nearest and dearest friends, be segregated and persecuted, and become disobedient to his fatherly or governing authorities, to whom he otherwise owes all obedience in their rule, for Christ's sake, lest he be obedient to the devil? But what is to be done? It cannot and must not be otherwise. It is said (say the jurists and wise men in worldly matters): *Fiat justitia et pereat mundus*, let what is right be done, and let the world perish because of it. How much more must such things be said and kept in these high heavenly things and regiments, that the kingdom of Christ and his obedience may stand, though all the world should perish thereat; as also shall at last come to pass.

119 But this is said unto us, first, that we may be prepared to suffer, because we hear that in the kingdom of Christ we must live among enemies. For Christ is not the one who starts this strife and makes enmity or discord, but must suffer it from his enemies; and it is not the opinion that we should set ourselves physically against our enemies, as the Anabaptists and other rebels intend. For Christ has nothing to do with such worldly power and rule in his kingdom, and we Christians cannot beat the devil and the world with bodily force or weapons, nor bring them under us, but they are far superior to us in this, and have and hold us with body and goods in their power. And we must not hope that they will keep us well in their kingdom and show us much friendship, but should provide us with nothing else than that they will play along with us, that we know and feel that we have enemies, and all kinds of torture and death, sword and fire await us from them, therefore we must consider the suffering here and surrender in patience.

120) But the least suffering that the devil brings upon us through the world is when he attacks Christianity outwardly and with bodily weapons, such as the sword, the candle, and the pestle.

ker, robbery of goods and body to it. But this is much more serious, when he himself drives inwardly, attacking, torturing and tormenting the hearts with his lost fiery arrows, that is, with the terror and fear of sin and God's wrath, since he gives man, who is otherwise stupid and fearful, a little drink, not of bitter wormwood and gall, but which is called the fear of hell; and leads him into a bath, where he lies as in a fiery furnace, that his heart may melt; as he himself did to Christ in the garden, that he had to sweat mild blood [Luc. 22, 44.]. This is the true suffering, which surpasses all torture and suffering, because Christians have to endure it and run through the spears; as St. Paul complains [1 Cor. 15, 31. 2 Cor. 4, 11.] that he dies daily and feels the same death in his body, that such a one should rather suffer all bodily torture and death.

But nothing else comes of it, we have to serve the devil. Because he must suffer and feels that Christ wants to step on his head through us (as Genesis 3:15 says), we must also suffer so that he shoots his poison at us and bites with all his might into our heels, bites and stabs with death and hell, and so that it hurts us and goes through our hearts.

122. But here we are also shown and given comfort and help, namely, that we should believe and be certain, even if we have to suffer and be scratched, bitten and stung, both inwardly and outwardly, that this King of ours should reign and have the upper hand over and against all these enemies, devils, sin, death, the world, which are not primarily our enemies but his, and which afflict us for his sake; And so he shall reign and prevail, that in his Christians, though they be exceedingly afraid and weak, and lie under death and hell, yet he will be mighty through his consolation, power and victory, joy and life, against the devil's terrors, sin, fear, and anguish of death; and they shall overcome and prevail in such warfare by faith and consolation of this word, that he is the Lord and sovereign, even in the midst of his enemies: so that they may

Sin, if it terrifies and afflicts them, shall not condemn them, and death shall have no power over them; but in this Lord they shall have forgiveness of sins and redemption from death, that is, eternal righteousness, life and joy. For this purpose he gave and sent this scepter (the word of the gospel), and also maintains it, so that he will stand by the Christians in their suffering, weakness, struggle and anxiety, and protect and finally redeem them.

123) Secondly, for the consolation of Christianity, the victory and dominion against the outward persecution of the devil and his scales, who have in mind to dampen and destroy both the gospel and the church or Christianity. And indeed the devil does such work, both through the tyrants with bloodshed and violence, and through his mobs and false Christians with distortion and falsification of doctrine; or in each case with shameful ingratitude, excess and contempt of the word, that it seems as if it would soon be over with the gospel and the Christian church. But so that this does not happen, this saying should be good for us, since God wants this king with his scepter and means to rule, let the devil or the world rage and rage against it as they can, and fall or remain as they please.

124 Experience has proven this enormously since the time of the apostles and the first church. For the world has always tried and proven itself honestly against this king, but especially the Roman Empire, when it was in its best nature and highest capacity, which has set itself against Christianity with all seriousness, and so attacked that it is called attacked. And if one were to count what Christian blood has been shed by it, I think that the city of Rome alone should have more than twice a hundred thousand martyrs, for there lie in one churchyard alone ten thousand martyrs and six and forty bishops. And it is written that in one day in the Roman Empire six times a hundred thousand Christians were executed.

(125) This was a serious attack on the matter, and would truly end it, and make this David a liar, and set the contradiction: Thou shalt not rule; and

1) that is, poisoned.

It could be seen as if it were so. But it was not done so soon. For they still let this Christ remain with his kingdom. And as long as this defiance and comfort remains under the left teat, that Christ is believed to be seated at the right hand of God, and that he is commanded by God to reign, then he shall remain well in the sight of all the world. For they have not yet been able to throw him down, nor to destroy his kingdom. And I hope that the Roman Empire alone will deliver up to God twenty times a hundred thousand martyrs on the last day, without what the Jews executed before, and what the Turks executed afterwards in large numbers, and what Christians died in the cradle or otherwise.

But the pope has only done the best to weaken the kingdom of Christ and to strengthen and increase the devil's kingdom (but under Christ's and the church's name), so that there is no doubt in my mind that he will deliver countless more souls to the devil than he has sacrificed to Christ. As he himself, as a prophet, testifies about his own neck, about himself, and unashamedly, as a public and by himself known and condemned anti-Christ and devil apostle, proclaims such glory, and writes in his praiseworthy book: 1) If all the world would see a pope lead innumerable heaps of souls to the devil in the abyss of hell, nevertheless, no one shall punish him, nor shall defend him, and say: Why do you do this?

127 Now this is what is meant by grabbing hold of things and making them so that this King, Christ, does not reign. But what have they all accomplished? The Christians have died in Christ and have their eternal life, and their name is praised and glorified forever; but those who wanted to suppress it lie in ashes with their power and dominion, and must suffer eternal shame and torment for it. And the mighty imperial see of Rome has left it undamped, indeed, has fallen to the ground just because of it, and has probably been burned three times and turned back, and Christianity has only increased, grown and spread from its persecution, until they themselves have had to repent of the gospel.

and become Christians. That these remaining fires, the Turk and the pope, and what is attached to him, which are now subjected to dampen the gospel with their smoke, must also be completely reduced to ashes and powder. The pope with his triple crown and power has already begun to fall down with all shame and mockery, and is also being kicked into the mud by his own relatives, and is running with the Plätting regiment to the end.

And what more can be said of this? That this kingdom of Christ alone exists and is maintained by divine, almighty power and authority may well be grasped from the fact that baptism, the sacrament, the preaching chair, faith, holy scripture and the confession of the name of Christ are still in the world to this day. For if this were not the case, the devil would be so powerful and strong, and such an evil enemy, and would have tried and worked on it for so long, that he would have long since suppressed and eradicated everything a thousand times over, so that in the wide world and under the sun there would be no baptismal font, no altar, no preaching chair, indeed, no confession of Christ, and we would now know less to say about him than the children know about the Tatars or the red Jews.

But now a baptized Christian still lives on earth, and a preaching stand still stands, yes, that the name of Christ still remains somewhat known, against the devil's fierce anger and rage, that is vain high, heavenly power of this Lord. And so this article, that he sits at the right hand of God with his power, is not only testified by faith, but also by public experience. And from this it is once again powerfully proven that this Christ must be a real, true God, that he has such power and strength to maintain his kingdom against this mighty spirit, even against sin and death. For this is not a foreign or granted power (that only the Father does this), but his own power and authority; as he speaks here, that he should not rule through the help or protection of another, but himself (as a God), through his word or sent scepter, over and against all power of all enemies, whether in heaven, on earth, or in hell.

130 Therefore, whoever wants to stay in front of the

1) The "laudable book" is the *jus eanonieum*.

If anyone is afraid of the terror and dread of the world, and of the devil's wrath and raging, lest he fear to death and despair of Christ and his kingdom, he may hold to this verse and defy the present enemies of the gospel by trying to see if they will be the first to destroy him. If they do so, let us trust in them and worship them for this Lord. But I hope they will leave it a little while longer, since the others have left it, so that he may remain before them, as he has remained until now, and let us sing this verse together with our descendants even longer. For if it had been extinguished, it would have been extinguished a thousand years ago by the mighty empire of the world, against which the present kings and lords are nothing. Now they have left this psalm behind them without their thanks, yes, with their raving and raging they have only brought it further, and we have to thank them that we know about this Lord. The enemies themselves see this and know it well; they still want to fight against this rock with their mad head, as if they were the people who could or should overthrow it, and they will not stop until they have run off their heads and lie down in the ashes with their power and authority, just as Jerusalem and Rome have done.

V. 3. After your victory, your people will willingly sacrifice to you in holy adornment.

(131) He has described both the person and power of this king and where and how he is to rule. Now he tells what kind of people he will have and how they will oppose him. For he said nothing before but of vain enemies, and showed that he would have enemies wherever he went with his scepter, and that especially there his kingdom should begin and his scepter go out, that is, in Zion and among the Jewish people. These were the ones who were to be his dear children and friends, and who received and accepted him with all honors as the true Messiah and King, who had been promised to them by God, and for whom they had waited so long. But now he comes to them, not with worldly, royal splendor and power, but preaching and preaching to them alone.

they will not and do not want to be; yes, they become his bitterest enemies, began to persecute him, and cannot stop until they have brought him to the cross and killed and driven away his apostles or messengers, just for the sake of such preaching that he wants to be the King of Israel and the Son of God, until they themselves fall to the ground because of it and are destroyed. So it had to happen to this king that his own people, especially the rulers and the best core of them, did not want to hear him or suffer, as John Cap. 1, 11. says: "He came into his own possession and his own did not receive him. And the prophets (as Isaiah, Daniel, Hosea) had clearly proclaimed beforehand that his own people would fall away from him, and not respect him, so that he also had to let them go, and send his scepter among the Gentiles.

Because it was said of him that he would have enemies everywhere, and that his Jews themselves would fall from him first, one would be surprised if he wanted to take people and nations. For who would be willing to join such a king, to whom he would see all the world at enmity, and his own people set themselves against him? Or, how is it to be hoped that foreign people (as we are Gentiles), who have known nothing of him, should accept him, if his own cannot stand him? Now the prophet says in this verse that this king will nevertheless have a people who will be his people, even in the midst of his enemies. And gives us the comfort that there should always be and remain in the world a holy Christian church, as the article of our faith teaches us, that is, such a group (whoever and wherever they are), who cling to this Lord with one accord, publicly leading and confessing his scepter and word in the world.

133 And this very verse is set against the great, excellent glory of the synagogue, or the Jewish people, and against the great trouble that the apostles and first Christians had to see and suffer, that they had to separate themselves from the people and preach against those who were called God's people, chosen and set apart by God Himself with the law, temple, priesthood, promises 2c. As they also stubbornly and proudly insisted on it

and defied as if no other people should be or could be, and therefore so hostilely and horribly persecuted those who believed in this Christ and preached about Him to the Gentiles that they should be saved through Him, without the Law of Moses, as apostates from God's people, disobedient to God, tearing apart and destroying His law, priesthood, the beautiful service of God and all God's order, and for this reason, as blasphemers and rebels, should be condemned and executed by God.

Against such an uproar, he strengthens the believers or Christians here, so that they should not turn their minds to whether they would see the Jewish synagogue fall away from Christ, and his Christians be persecuted by them, with a perfect pretense, as God's people and in God's name, but know that it is no longer the Jews, but this little group that believes in Christ, that is to be the right people of God. And that hereby the synagogue is given leave, and the little song of separation is sung, which is called: Let go what will not remain; and: As thou wilt, so will I. For because they neither like nor want this Lord and King, who is promised and given to them by God above all others, that they should boast of Himself to the highest degree in the sight of all the world, but go away and become His enemies, and so turn away, that those who should be His people do not want to be, and (as St. Paul Apost. Paul Apost. 13, 46. says) consider themselves unworthy of eternal life, so he also turns it around with them, that they also should not be worthy of him, and so that now is not God's people, so is called God's people, and again, that is God's people, which was not God's people, as the prophet Hosea Cap. 2, 23. says. And because they are no longer His people, all their glory and deeds, worship, temple, priesthood, shall be no more, and they themselves, with their lands and people, shall be rejected. For no nation, no priesthood, no worship, no life shall be of any value in the sight of God, except that which is of this king; as it is said hereafter of his new priesthood, and here of God's new servants and worship.

So it has always gone, and so it still goes in the world, since one argues about it,

which is called God's people, the Christian church, the service of God, that those who most gloriously lead the appearance and glory of the same are not; and again, those who are, must be persecuted by those, and do not have the name. As hitherto and still the whole papacy alone want to be called the church, boast of the apostles' descendants, heirs and possessors of the same see 2c., and yet are nothing else but just the right opponents and enemies of Christ, persecutors and destroyers of his kingdom or the Christian church, as their public, known deed proves and testifies.

(136) Therefore, as to who are the people of God, or the church of Christ, there is no other rule or test by which it can be said and concluded with certainty, except this alone: where there is a company of those who accept the word of the Lord, teach and confess it purely against those who persecute it, and suffer for it what they ought, as we shall hear. Now this is that he saith, Thy people shall willingly sacrifice unto thee; as if he should say, Though thine own people fall from thee, and all the world be set against thy kingdom, yet shalt thou have a people, who shall gladly receive thee, and be glad that they may be thy people.

137 And by the word "willingly offering" he describes what kind of people it will be, or what kind of people they must be, who are this Lord's people or his Christian church; item, what the worship of them is, so that he distinguishes or separates them from the seeming false church and false worship. For first of all, he calls such a people spontaneous, who are unconstrained and without hypocrisy, "willingly" and with pleasure and love obedient to and subject to this Lord, and are thus minded that they want to remain with him and not let themselves be torn away from him, regardless of such annoying examples that the greater and best part of the world, the wise, scholars, saints, and those who want to be called God's people, deny him and blaspheme and rage against his word; Not to be terrified nor disparaged by any violence, oppression, terror, persecution or suffering, whether from the world or from the devil himself; and, in sum, to hold fast to Christ, that they be not vexed nor hindered,

They must despise everything, be it evil or good, or ever overcome it, and thus remain firmly and always with this Lord, even if they have to be alone and stand against all men on earth, and forfeit everything they have, property, honor, friendship, life and limb, because of it.

This is why the word "willing" is used to indicate the quality and power of this kingdom, as opposed to all other regimes on earth, whether they are called the emperor's or Moses', secular or spiritual regimes, where people are to be made religious with laws and commandments, and with coercion or punishment against the disobedient. As one must do in the worldly government, which rules externally over life and limb. For men are wicked, and would not be obedient of themselves unless they were compelled by force, and kept in fear with sword, gallows, and all manner of punishment, that they should be obedient, though they would not, and should forbear that which they would otherwise willingly do. So also in the Law of Moses, and in the regiment that goes not only over the body, but also over the conscience, and demands how one should live against God and be obedient to Him, this is also done so that it forces people and drives them to obedience, with the threat of God's wrath and eternal death and damnation, as well as temporal punishments and plagues.

But none of these regiments is able to make such people willingly and gladly obedient and pious, and no force or power on earth can bring them to that point. They may do this by enforcing outward discipline and obedience; as it should and must be, that naughty, coarse people are thus kept in check, and the youth are accustomed and instructed by various commandments and laws, that they may live in a fine manner, chastely and obediently before the world; for which purpose the whole worldly government with its orders, rights and arts is directed.

Item 140: If it comes to teaching people what God wants from us, and preaching the Law or the Ten Commandments, urging punishment, and luring or tempting the good things promised to the pious, some may still be tempted by it.

are moved to attack each other and want to be pious and serve God, practicing the works of the law with diligence and earnestness; just as Paul did before he was converted and became a Christian. But this is still vain hypocrisy and only outward piety, enforced by the law, which is not valid before God; there is still no heartfelt love and desire of the heart for the law, no true inward obedience, fear, faith nor knowledge of God. Yes, such people do not know and do not understand that the law demands such perfect, heartfelt obedience, cannot see or recognize their sin and disobedience, see the law only through a curtain, and always remain blind, so that they never understand what God demands of them and how far they are from it.

141. But when the law reaches its highest point and accomplishes its best and most noble work, namely, that it brings man to the realization that he sees and understands how God's commandment demands perfect, heartfelt obedience from him, and how he neither keeps nor can keep it, and thus feels nothing but sin and God's wrath in and over him: Only then does the right, horrible disobedience to God arise, and he feels well how nature is not able, nor can it be brought by laws, to be obedient to God from the heart and willingly, but the contradiction is found. For when it is condemned by the law, cast under God's wrath and condemned to hell, it begins to become hostile to the law and harbors a terrible, bitter anger and hatred against God; it falls into blasphemy, despair and eternal death, unless it is helped out of it by the gospel of Christ.

Since it is said of this kingdom of Christ that he shall have such a people and people who are willingly and gladly obedient, it is thus sufficiently indicated that he shall not rule in a worldly manner, nor bring the people to himself by sword or bodily force and keep them in his obedience, as the kings and lords of the earth do. Nor is his rule like Moses' or the law's rule, because the latter, as has been said, only drives, frightens and torments people with the fear of divine wrath and punishment, so that they flinch before God and finally despair,

and therefore is nothing else than what St. Paul calls it in the other [Epistle to the^a] Corinthians Cap. 3, 7, an office of death.

143. and in sum, he shows that this king must rule in a different way, and establish such a kingdom, in which he makes this whole present nature new or different, and restores all the damage in which human nature has fallen. For the same is so utterly corrupted by the same fall of inheritance that it neither wants nor is able to be obedient to God; as St. Paul Rom. 8, 7. says: "To be carnally (or naturally) minded is enmity against God" 2c. And even if she practices outward works of the law, the right knots, evil desires, unbelief, secret disgust, anger and hatred against God always remain in the heart, until it finally breaks out in public disobedience, contempt and blasphemy against God, or final despair.

Since there is no ability in this entire human nature to obey God, and God still wants the Ten Commandments and His obedience to be kept, He must intervene so that the old disobedient, corrupt nature is changed and made new, and so that hearts, minds and spirits are created that willingly and with pleasure show perfect obedience to God. Now how does this happen, and what is it that brings it about? Nothing else, but (as stated in the previous verse) the scepter sent forth, that is, the preaching of the Gospel, by which this king reigns and does everything. And herewith it is shown what kind of word and preaching it should be, which should have such power that people are drawn to come willingly, which otherwise cannot be done by any power or force on earth; namely, that does not, as the law does, drive upon us with demands of things we cannot do, nor afflict us with dread, terror, and condemnation, but shows us counsel, comfort, and help against these things, so that we do not remain under God's wrath and condemnation (to which we are condemned by the law), but instead obtain God's grace and salvation, both from sin and death, and receive such power that we live in new, right obedience to God.

Now this is the sweet, joyful preaching of the gospel of Christ, which proclaims,

What we have from this King; namely, that although we were born and live in sins and under God's wrath, condemned to eternal death by the law, yet God had mercy on us and sent his Son Christ into the flesh, born of a virgin without sin, and gave him to us so that we might have forgiveness of sins, be redeemed from death, have eternal righteousness and eternal life; All this by pure grace and mercy, without any merit on our part, for the sake of Christ alone, who paid for our sin with his suffering and death, reconciled the Father, and by his resurrection overcame death and redeemed it in himself, appropriating and giving all these things to us.

To this end he promises and gives us the Holy Spirit, and through him works in us that our hearts may take such comfort, and so begin to be obedient to God, giving strength and power against sin and the terror of death, and protecting and preserving us against all the power of the devil. For this is why he ascended to heaven, that he might rule in us mightily, so that we might overcome sin, death and the devil. And even if we still have sin in us, and cannot do such obedience purely and perfectly as we should, it should not be imputed to us, because he as our mediator and high priest forbids and represents us to the Father [Rom. 8, 34. 1 Joh. 2, 1.], as we will hear later about his priesthood.

(147) Behold, by such preaching we come to be his people, and to be such people (as this text says) as willingly obey God. For when we hear that God is no longer angry with us, nor condemns us for our sins, as we deserve, but offers and gives us His grace and mercy, then the heart, which before fled from God and was hostile to Him, can have a childlike, joyful confidence in Him. And when a person is thus comforted and uplifted by faith, he gets new thoughts, courage and mind towards God, begins to love Him and to call upon Him from the heart and to wait for help in all troubles; he gets desire and love for His commandments, is ready to do anything for the sake of God.

and suffer what he should. For he is now governed by the Holy Spirit, so that he may not be driven or compelled by law or punishment, as before. And even though obedience is still weak, even impure and imperfect, and there is still much disobedience, he takes comfort in grace and forgiveness through Christ, and to this end he struggles and resists the sinful inclinations through the help and strength of the Holy Spirit and overcomes them, until both sin and death cease altogether and are put to death in this sinful and mortal body.

So you see in this such a kingdom of this Christ, in which he makes new the whole human nature by divine power and strength; so that in us a new light, and right complete knowledge of God and new courage grows, so that we are redeemed from blindness, unbelief, evil desire and all works of disobedience and live pure, without sin and death, eternally righteous and blessed with God. This begins here in this life with the Christians, but will only become perfect in that life after the resurrection, when the whole nature, body and soul, will live in pure, eternal obedience to God.

And from this is also to be seen the power of this preaching of the gospel, so that Christ thereby proves himself above all power and authority of the world and of all creatures, that he, without any coercion or outward power, by the word alone draws hearts to himself and "brings them to his obedience" out of the power of the devil, sin and death (to which all men, except Christ, must be eternally subject and captive), and brings them to eternal, divine freedom, righteousness and life. All these great and excellent things are accomplished through the preaching of the gospel, which may be considered small and without power, as the voice and word of a man, but he does it through invisible, divine power, and works in the heart through the Holy Spirit, so that St. Paul calls the gospel "a power of God that saves everyone who believes in it" [Rom. 1:16].

150 This is what has been said about this king's people or his Christianity, namely, those who have been brought here by the word of the gospel, so that they may willingly believe through faith.

cling to him. From this it follows what is the right worship of them, which the prophet here indicates by the word "willingly offering", and thus shows the worship of the New Testament. For since this is to be a new kingdom and a new people, there must also be new worship, in which Christ has begun to change the nature, so that they serve him in right, willing obedience. Therefore he sets this word against the worship of the Old Testament, and against all other worship of the world, which is not in Christ. As the world always and still pretends and praises many and excellent worship services, and all worship services are called what each one thinks of, and yet none of them is valid before God, but everything is rejected herewith.

For all such worship is only in outward works, of which they think that if they do them much, it must please God, when inwardly in the heart there is no right knowledge, fear, faith, invocation, love, nor obedience to God, indeed, the heart is without God, and yet they court Him with various outward works, that they sacrifice much, pray, fast, and lead a strict life, and by such works they presume to propitiate God's wrath, to atone for sin and to pay for it; and the most shameful thing about it is that it is vain such works, which they devised and chose without God's word itself, which are everywhere rejected in Scripture as vain heathen worship and true idolatry, which the world has always been full of, even among the Jews, who were called God's people, as the prophets everywhere cry out against it; but much more and more abominably prevailed in the church, especially at this last time, under the papacy, with so many kinds of monasticism, sacrificial rites, holy services, pilgrimages 2c. and such innumerable abominations, which alone have been praised for spiritual, holy life and excellent worship, so that the faith and the works commanded by God have been forgotten, even despised, and not considered worthy to be called worship.

But let these go, for they are not so good as to be spoken of here. We are now talking about those who, according to GOt-

The first commandment is to serve God; as among the Jews, those who were the best, and kept the Law of Moses, given to them by God, and practiced daily all the works that were enjoined upon them therein, even the Ten Commandments. Which were the right works, and were called righteousness and the service of the law: yet are they not yet the right services which please him. For such works, in those who do not have the gospel or knowledge of Christ, are not done out of a right heart, trusting in God, or out of a right desire and love for God, but are still in unbelief and doubt against God, do not call upon Him from the heart, and are still full of evil desire and disobedience against God; nevertheless, they go about in such delusion as if they had kept the law, and rely on such works as if they had served God well with them. Therefore, apart from Christ, there can be no worship that pleases God, for it is all still the old nature, since the heart remains unregenerate and unchanged in its unbelief and disobedience to God.

When Christ is known and believed in through the gospel, as we obtain forgiveness of sins from God through him and please God for his sake, then right worship follows inwardly from the heart. For with such faith the Holy Spirit works in the heart, as was said above [§ 146], so that it acquires the desire and love to be obedient to God; it begins to fear Him from the heart, and to trust Him in all its life, to call upon Him in all its needs, to hold fast to the confession of His word, to praise Him with its life before all the world, and for His sake to gladly suffer and bear what God inflicts upon it 2c. These are the right services that please God, because they are done in faith in Christ and come from within the heart, which has now become a new creature in Christ, as St. Paul calls it Gal. 6, 15.

154 Thus the whole essence of the Old Testament with its outward worship is abolished, as it was not able to make such obedience and willing servants of God. And even though much outward worship, sacrifice and work was given to this people, it was not.

But in those who did not have the knowledge of Christ and faith, they did not please God. For this purpose, all of them were arranged for the same people no more than for the time being, so that they would be thus conceived, and only be their figures and images, by which they would remember the promise of Christ, until he himself would come and establish the right services (formed by that). For this reason they have also ceased from themselves since Christ came, and through the gospel created vain new ministers and services, which are not in an outward manner and gestures, but inwardly in the heart, and are not dead images, but truly new beings and life.

He now goes on to praise such willing sacrifices and new worship, and adds: "in holy adornment. With this word he makes this king's people (that is, his believing Christians) all priests, and says of a new and different priesthood or priesthood, as the Levitical was, which among the Jews alone had priestly honor and office; therefore make them, as standing there in their priestly garments (as those priests had to have in their office), gloriously and beautifully adorned for sacrifice and worship. For these words, "holy ornaments", according to the Scriptures, means nothing else than the beautiful priestly garments; as in Exodus 28, v. 2, God says to Moses, "You shall make Aaron holy garments, which shall be glorious and beautiful", and otherwise the word holy ornament or adornment often stands for priestly garments. For God commanded that the priests in their office and service should not be clothed in common garments, but in beautiful, holy garments, which no one else was permitted to wear; as these are all described in Exodus 28.

The prophet points to such a priestly office and adornment for the Christians, or the people of the New Testament, and says that their worship should be a beautiful, glorious priesthood, as those who always stand before God and perform holy sacrifices. And praise them with the highest divine glory and honor. For there is no higher name and honor before God and man than to be a priest, which is such a person and office,

so actually acts with God, and is closest to God, and deals with vain divine things. He gives such honor (I say) to all Christians here, that they, as the right priests, stand deliciously and beautifully adorned before God, and serve Him with right, holy worship.

What then is this "holy adornment" or priestly garment, so that Christianity is adorned and its holy priesthood is called? Nothing else, but the beautiful, divine, various gifts of the Holy Spirit (as St. Paul [Rom. 12, 6. Eph. 4, 7.] and Peter [1. Ep. 2, 9.] say), which are given to Christianity so that God may be known and praised through them. This is done primarily through the preaching of the gospel. For such gifts are to serve (says St. Paul [1 Cor. 12, 7.]) for the common benefit of Christianity, so that through our preaching, confession 2c. the people may be brought to the knowledge of God, and He may be honored thereby. For this reason we are ministers of God, and are called priests, so that all our actions, teaching and life may shine forth to the knowledge, honor and praise of God, as Christ says Matth. 5, 16, and St. Peter 1. Ep. 2, 9. says: "You are the royal priesthood, the holy people" 2c., "that you should proclaim the virtues of Him who has called you to His wonderful light.

Behold, such priestly sacrifice and service is required here, and that is the right holy adornment or priestly garments, which are glorious and delicious in the sight of God, and honor and praise Him, preach and confess the gospel, praise and give thanks for His grace, so that others may also be brought to such a kingdom of Christ. Which only the Christians can do, as true, holy priests before God, and much differently adorned than those Levitical priests in their outward splendor with gold, precious stones and silk [Ex. 28, 5. ff. 39, 2. Sir. 45, 12. ff.], also much differently consecrated and anointed, than our Pabst's larvae and Niclas bishops with their Chressem and oil, which all with their consecration, adornment and splendor, so that they want to be considered priests, may well be unholy and godless people. But the Christians must be vain holy priests, and have holy adornment. For here is another man who makes them priests.

The one high priest Christ [Hebr. 5, 5. 6. Hebr. Cap. 8 and 9^h], of which we will hear soon, and another Chressem or anointing and priestly ordination, namely the Holy Spirit, who adorns and clothes them gloriously and holy with His power and gifts (2 Cor. 1, 21. 22.). The same must be in the people who are to lead such a priesthood before God, and even put on the holy adornment and priestly garments for them. The regalia and splendor, choir caps, pointed hats, staffs, and what is more, in which the pope's larvae are resplendent, do not apply and do not serve this purpose.

By such an outward image it is well painted and indicated by the ancient fathers what the right priesthood or bishop's office and work should be. For they drew it all on the office of preaching. As that the hat goes together with two points, and on top of it a little cross; item, two ribbons hanging down behind, indicates that a bishop should have a right understanding, both of the Old and New Testament, and unite both together in Christ; item, that he should let such understanding of the Scriptures flutter freely and publicly through the preaching office. It would be right and fine, if they only kept it that way; but they have made a louder mask out of it, so that they ape the people, let themselves be called bishops, and yet none of them holds the office of a true bishop, indeed, many of them have never read a letter in the Scriptures, and some do not even know the infantile faith and the Ten Commandments.

160) But the Christians who believe, preach and confess the Word of God (as we, praise God, have) also have the right ornaments, the right episcopal hats on their heads; not adorned with precious virgin pearls, but with beautiful sayings and examples of Scripture, so that they can instruct and comfort the people, 2c. and a right golden or pearl crown on top of the hat: Hat, as those who for the confession of Christ (who is our Lord, and the glory of our Head, 1 Cor. 11, 3.) are willing to suffer all things; clothed also in pure white linen or albumen, that is, with good assurance, "pure" life, and good works.

161. the prophet looked at such holy ornaments with spiritual eyes here and

as glorious and splendid in the sight of God and all the angels, although it is neither valid nor recognized in the sight of the world, because it does not glitter and adorn like the crown and splendor of the pope and his bishops; indeed, it considers such divine, holy adornment to be stink and filth. For as it persecutes Christ the Lord, so it must also persecute his priests, and condemn, blaspheme and defile their preaching and confession as heresy. Thus the true priestly sacrifice is performed in the Christians, that they sacrifice themselves with body and life according to the example of Christ, their head and high priest, and for the sake of his honor. 2c. But because the dominion and kingdom of this Lord (as stated above, v. 2) shall remain, even in the midst of His enemies and persecutors, the adornment and glory of His priests with God, together with His angels and elect, shall be praised and preserved, in the face of the devil's and the world's reproach and raging. The others may boast of their "own piety and priesthood, and be resplendent with vain gold and precious stones (like the males at the dance), but with that they will count for nothing before God, yes, their adornment and splendor will be a stink and abomination before God, and their honor will be vain shame.

In this verse we have shown what kind of people this king has, and what the Christian church is, and how he rules and works in it powerfully through the word, so that it voluntarily adheres to him and is obedient to him, and what its service is, namely, a new, holy priesthood, in which God's glory and the knowledge of Christ are spread. All this is to take place (he says here) "after your victory", that is, after Christ in himself has overcome his enemies, sin, death, hell, the devil's power and the world's power through his resurrection and ascension, and has taken over the kingdom and dominion, and has publicly proclaimed this to the world through the gospel.

Your children will be born to you like the dew from the dawn.

A kingdom must be made so that children are always conceived in it and people grow up in it, so that it is preserved, so that it does not become desolate and perish. Thus must

This kingdom must also be governed so that it always increases and grows with people and has descendants, otherwise Christianity will exist and be a lasting being. This is also much more and more necessary in this kingdom. Because it (as 45 ff. Since it must be among enemies (as stated in 45 ff.), since the Christians must endure, leave house, court, life and limb and suffer as much as the devil's wrath and the wickedness of the world are always able to do, which they intend to eradicate and exterminate, that it is to be seen as if Christianity could not exist for long, and could not be preserved by any human counsel or power, and would therefore have to be devastated and soon perish, if it were not preserved by God's miraculous power and might; That is why he promises here that Christianity shall be raised up in such a way that new Christians shall be born and grow up daily, so that it can remain on earth forever.

How is this to happen, and where do such children come from? He says: "Your children will be born to you like the dew from the dawn. What is this, children are born out of the dawn? That must be a strange birth and strange mother and children. Who has ever heard of children being born out of the dawn, and how does that rhyme with Christianity? And who told this prophet such a thing? Yes, who could have understood it, if it was not revealed through the gospel, since it is understood by few, even now that it is fulfilled?

He has set this as a similitude, so that these spiritual things may be delicately illustrated and painted, namely, that this birth of the children of this kingdom (that is, of the Christians) is like the dear dew that falls in the spring every day early in the morning, and yet no one can tell how it is made, or where it comes from, nor does it lie on the grass every morning; and the same time of the dew is the very funniest among the dawns. And summa, nothing more of it can be shown or seen, without it coming early in the morning with the dawn, before the sun comes out, and thus the dawn of the dew is called mother, but yet it cannot be seen from where or of what it is made.

will. For it is not rain falling from the clouds that can be seen and felt, but God's own work that such dew falls every morning, and yet it is the most gentle rain, and the noblest water and sap, so that leaves and grass and the whole earth are refreshed, so that the plants do not wither from the heat of the day.

166) The prophet Micah Cap. 5, 6. also made this 1) similar statement in the same case of the kingdom of Christ (perhaps from this Psalm): "The remnant of Jacob," he says, "shall be among many nations, as the dew of the Lord, and as the drops of the grass, waiting for no man, nor waiting for men." That is, the apostles and the rest of the Christians of the Jewish people are to come among the Gentiles and gather a people to Christ, not by the sword or by bodily force and power, but by divine power (as he shows in the preaching of the gospel), just as the dew comes from heaven without any human intervention and moistens the earth and makes it fertile.

Thus it shall be also in this kingdom, that children shall be born unto the Lord Christ; not naturally of flesh and blood, nor by man's help and consent, nor such as men can understand and comprehend; but it is a spiritual, heavenly birth, by the invisible, divine power of the Holy Ghost, which worketh in man by the word, and maketh new believing hearts. For, as above

143. 144] It has been said that what is of this kingdom and belongs to Christ, the old nature must cease and become a new nature; so that nothing helps flesh and blood, father or mother, and what is the property of men; for Christians are not born of blood and flesh, but only sinners, and what men are (born in sins and to death), God's children cannot make, as Christ says John 3:6: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Item, v. 3: "Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into God's kingdom."

168 Therefore, this is a tremendous down-

But especially here the prophet has cut off both horns of his Moses, and has put on his people, the Jews, high glory and defiance, which they had from the fact that they were Abraham's seed and the holy patriarchs' children and heirs, and therefore were called God's people and children of the kingdom alone, as the right nobility in the world, and the inheritance of all Gentiles was promised to them [John 8:33]. 8, 33.] They also proudly boasted and proudly boasted about it, and were so stubborn about it that no one could take it away from them, and they did not want to hear or suffer when they were punished by the prophets, and therefore they also persecuted the apostles and preachers of the gospel until they fell to the ground because of it. For this was (as they thought) their certain reason, and irrefutably decided: We are children of the holy fathers, have the law given by God, and the promise of Christ; God will not cast off His people 2c. As they cannot let go of the sense even today, whether they are so shamefully lacking and destroyed, that experience, over fifteen hundred years, should have taught them otherwise. They are so tickled by the honor that they would like to be called God's people alone, and to become masters of the whole world through their Messiah.

Now this Psalm clearly states the contradiction, that in God's kingdom the birth or filiation and origin of Abraham, or his blood and tribe, nor what may be born of flesh and blood, should not be valid. For if one were to become a Christian from this, then all the Jews, or even several of them, should also have accepted this Christ (who was of their stock and also Abraham's seed) as their blood and flesh; but it must be a different birth, from heaven, that they become other people by divine power through faith in Christ. As if he meant to say, "You are indeed the children of Abraham and of the holy fathers, of the stock and blood to whom Christ is promised; but for this reason you are not yet the children of God, and such a natural birth and blood will not help you, if you do not, like your fathers, take such things for granted.

1) In the old editions: the.

and all your glory, and accept this Christ with faith [Rom. 9:7, 8]. For even your father Abraham did not become God's child through his birth (even though he came from the old holy archfathers), and had to accept another birth himself and become a believer, so that he would become God's friend and a father of many Gentiles. So also those who are to become true children of Abrahah, that is, Christians (be they Jews or Gentiles), do not attain this either from themselves or from their fathers, unless they are born anew through faith in this Christ; as St. Paul abundantly emphasizes to the Romans on the 4th, v. 5 [Gal. 3, 6].

But rather, the shameful presumption and boasting of ours, who want to make Christians and God's children with their doctrine of works, is put down and condemned here, putting the Christian essence on external things, conceived by men, and binding the Christian church to such external laws, order, manner and giving. And to strengthen this, they lead and praise the holy fathers, Concilio, as the descendants of the apostles; they do not speak of the faith in Christ that those who were holy had or taught, but lead the people only to external human statutes, as if one had to keep them out of necessity. They pretend that anyone who is not obedient to the See of Rome and its bishops, and who does not keep with them all that they have established and ordained, is not a Christian, even though he believes in Christ and lives a Christian life. They then sanctify and exalt those who have taught with them and confirmed it with their lives and example; they condemn as heretics and unbelievers those who hold otherwise.

But what shall we say of these, who are much, much more foolish than the Jews, who had the glory that they were true natural children and heirs of the holy fathers, and that their laws were all ordained and given by God, but who cannot boast of this by birth, nor that their thing is thus commanded and imposed by God, but is all of their own choosing by man? Nor has there been such an appearance that all the world has fallen for it and been so deeply immersed in it that

This alone would be the right Christian nature and the rule of the Christian church. And who can persuade our people this very day to recognize and understand this, which every sensible man would like to grasp? If the glory and honor of the Jewish people's natural birth and blood from the holy fathers, item, from the law, priesthood, worship, which they kept by God's command, did not help them to become God's children, but because they did not want to accept this Christ with faith, even because they defied him in such a fleshly birth, they are completely rejected with everything they boasted of, and yet Christ has his people and children: [then it is certain] 1) that much less will these with their self-chosen, own deed and glory be counted, and he also can make them lack and fall with their boasting and name of the church.

Therefore let us well learn, as the prophet here shows and interprets to us the true church and true Christians, that it is not such a thing, which one could understand and measure according to outward nature, or grasp with rules and order, or put the persons before the eyes, and say: These, who are born of this blossom and tribe, live like this or otherwise, keep such manner and order, these are Christians, or the Christian church. Summa, it is none of these that men do out of their own initiative and ability that makes them Christians, or from which the Christian church comes. But thus it is said, "Thy children shall be born unto thee as the dew out of the morning light." It is not possible to say how it happens, or how it is made, nor can man do anything about it, nor help it; but it is a purely divine work, which happens without all our thinking and worrying, so that the dew lies there every morning, and the droplets are seen on the leaves and grass, as if from a rain, since there is neither rain nor pellets, or anything from which water tends to be made, but a beautiful, bright sky; and comes not at noon, evening, how or when we will, but only in the morning, when the dawn shines and wants to bring the day.

1) Added by us.

So shall it be with the Christian church and children of his kingdom. They are to be born, says this verse. This is not done by painting or carving, as one makes children from sheets of card, or carves and colors a wooden bishop; as they want to work and form themselves and others with works until they can make a Christian, or form a Christian church with laws; it remains unformed and uncarved; but the whole being must be there at once. Just as the dew does not fall with individual droplets one after the other, or is collected, but lies all at once completely on the earth. And as a natural fruit or child in the womb is not put together piecemeal, or by individual members, nor is it born, but is formed and born all at once, whole and entire, and when one member grows, they all grow.

But here it must be a different birth (as has been said) than from father and mother, or through man. It is indeed God's work that man is born naturally, for no man of himself could make a hair or a drop of blood; yet God does so through father and mother, and such birth comes from their flesh and blood. But to the Christian birth no man can give or do anything, and must be called (as Jn. 1, 13.), "not of the flower, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of the man" (that is, not men, nor of the holy fathers natural, nor of corneous or chosen children, as the pope wants to make Christians by his own choice through his law), "but born of GOD", through a new heavenly birth (namely "of water and the Holy Spirit" [Jn. 3, 5.]), which cannot be understood or felt by reason, but happens and is accomplished by faith, which the Holy Spirit gives into the heart through the Word.

(175) As Christ also declares in the same sermon to Nicodemo, John 3:8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. There he also leads a likeness and picture of the spiritual birth of the wind, almost like this one

from the dew of the dawn. For in both it is finely shown that this work, which is called becoming a Christian or God's child, is not done by human power or understanding, but from heaven, by the Holy Spirit alone, and yet by the word or preaching of the gospel and baptism. Just as one sees nothing of the dew, nor learns how or of what it is made, until the droplets lie on the earth; and of the wind neither knows nor feels where it comes from, or where it remains, except that one hears it whirring and blowing; and yet this happens daily, both that the dew from heaven makes the earth fertile, and the wind cools it.

So it is also in this divine birth out of water and the Spirit. You see the water of baptism as the dew, and hear the outward oral word as the wind; but you cannot see, hear or understand the spirit and what is accomplished there, namely how a man is cleansed from baptism and becomes a saint in the hand of the priest, and a child of hell becomes a child of God; And yet such things are truly accomplished, and are proved by power, that it must be said that the Holy Spirit was there, and by water and word made believing men; which could not be done by any human power.

177. Therefore, whoever teaches and holds otherwise that a man becomes a Christian or a child of God by work or obedience to the pope and the commandment of the church (as they call it), is lying to this holy prophet and to Christ Himself, and is doing violence and injustice to the true Christian church, which confesses, teaches and believes the contradiction with her Lord Christ and the holy fathers, that we are not called children of God made by works, or born of man's choice and obedience, nor even grown by ourselves, but born again of God through the Holy Spirit and water, without any action on our part: That it may be a pure work of God, and that the glory and honor of His divine grace may remain pure and unadulterated.

The other part.

V. 4. The Lord has sworn and will not repent. You are a priest forever, after the manner of Melchizedek.

Up to this point the prophet has prophesied mightily, both of the kingdom of Christ, his reward, and yet also true Lord and God, and of his people. Now he continues, not leaving it enough that he has made him king and Lord over all, but also makes him priest and pope (with leave that I take this word to this person). For since we commanded above [§ 137] that this king should have a new people, he must also have a priesthood for such a people, that he may rule them in conscience and against God. For where there is a kingdom and God's people, there must also be a priesthood and service, to show the people God's word and will, and to act between God and them. Therefore give the one Christ both offices, that he should be the eternal king and also the eternal priest.

(179) But these are strange and strange words; for he is nowhere else called by such a name in the Scriptures, and the Jews have little understood (as they do not yet understand) that their Messiah should be a priest; yea, it has also been said by them in a very vexatious and lying manner. For they all know this well, that by the ordinance of God the people of Israel were divided into twelve tribes or families (after the twelve children of Jacob), and so distinguished that they should not be cast and mingled together. Although he did this mostly for the sake of the Lord Christ, so that it would be known where he was born from and of which family, he also wanted to arrange the government differently, especially the spiritual or priestly office, separated from all the others.

180: For first of all, he made the temporal or princely rule almost through all families and tribes (as Joshua and the book of Judges testify), and also gave them the first king Saul from the tribe of Benjamin [1 Sam. 9:1], until he chose David from the tribe of Judah [1 Sam. 16:1], and made a covenant with him that the kingdom should remain in his tribe and his house until Christ [2 Sam. 7:16]. Nevertheless such a kingdom was divided (after King Solomon), and a separate one was set up by the ten tribes.

(1 Kings 12:19). But for the priesthood and the spiritual government he set apart and ordained the one tribe of Levi from the beginning, and especially the house or family of Aaron [Exodus 28 and 29, Numbers 8:16], and also kept it so that it always remained with this tribe, so that no one else had to be subject to this office, not even David himself.

181 Now he goes to all of this and also takes hold of the priestly regiment, and says: this promised son of his, Christ, shall not only be king (as it is due to him according to God's order), but also priest at the same time, since he was not of the priestly tribe of Aaron and Levi, and according to them could not be a priest, but should be born from Judah. This means that he spoke against Moses and against God's order, and this David could be called a heretic or a rebellious prophet and teacher, who was allowed to take the priesthood without God's command and commandment, and to combine the two persons, king and priest, and to make one out of them, which God wanted to separate, and which also had to be different offices, according to worldly and external ways.

The Jews are blind here and know nothing about this; but we Christians see that, as David saw here, when this King, Christ, would come, Moses with his priesthood and all his rule and laws should leave and cease. For all things are also set and directed to this person; he shall be the man who is not called, as Moses was (says the epistle to the Hebrews on the 3rd, v. 3.) servant in the house, but the LORD himself. For what Moses ordered (even though it was done by God's command), he did only for the future Christ, and thereby prepared the people and made them ready for him to dwell in them as in his own house and to rule them himself. Therefore, if he were here, both the Law of Moses and everything else would give way to him and look like what the Lord would do, to whom God has given it into his hands. Therefore, neither Moses nor the priesthood is of any value to him, but all of them must and must be given to him.

(as your right Lord) hand over the keys and serve, and Moses [shall] say: I am not your Lord, but was this Lord's servant. So Aaron also shall say, I am indeed high priest (by God's command), but my priesthood is no further than from this LORD. Now that he is coming, I and all the people should accept and honor him as the right high priest.

In the time of Christ and the apostles, the chief priests and the whole synagogue should have done the same, and our Jews still do to this day, against this Lord. Now, however, they are going to preserve their Mosaic and Levitical priesthood forever, against this Christ. And because we believe and hold Christ (as this Psalm says), that he alone is both eternal King and High Priest, they condemn us, as they do not hold the Moshe and the Scriptures, when they openly lust and rage against their own King and Prophet David, yes, basically against all the Scriptures that prophesy of this Christ.

184 But it is sufficiently indicated in this verse that this priesthood of Christ is to be a new and much different priesthood, neither that was in the Old Testament, Aaron and his family. For he is silent about it and mentions a new priesthood, which was not in use at that time, nor was it known, namely, such a priest and priesthood, which was after the manner of Melchizedek. This must be different from the way of Aaron; nevertheless, so that he does not touch Aaron and his priesthood too closely, he leaves him his order, way and right of his priesthood. Since Christ is to be both king and priest in one person, and since it has been said that he is not a king in the world or in the flesh, his priesthood must also be not in the flesh but in the spirit, otherwise he could not hold both offices at the same time and without distinction.

There is much to be said about this priesthood, for it is a very rich text, setting forth the high principles of Christian doctrine, and there is nothing in all Scripture more comforting than what is said about the priesthood of our dear Christ. This text in the Epistle to the Hebrews is also beautifully and deliciously composed.

that it is the right gloss and interpretation of this psalm, and in this piece a right noble epistle, and therefore well worthy to be written with gold. But before we say any more about it, let us first go over the text and see that it speaks:

The Lord has sworn and will not repent.

Of course, this must be something very great, and for no small reason that he does not badly say that God has made him a priest, but shows a divine oath to this effect, that he has sworn it, and assured it with a solemn oath. He uses this word, first of all, against his own people, the Jews, because he has seen that they are hostile to it, and would hardly believe it, indeed, the majority of them blaspheme against it, and defy God's commandment and order of their old priesthood; it is not possible that God should speak against himself, and overturn his own order, therefore God must not have said it, or ever not be God's opinion.

187 Against this he says that God not only said it (as it says above, v. 1. He says that God not only said it (as it says of the kingdom above, v. 1: "The Lord spoke to my Lord"), but swore an oath to it, and so that it should remain irrevocably and unchanged, and that all the world (especially its Jews) should renounce that it is His earnest and final opinion that they should accept this priest, even if they had to let go of their Levitical priesthood because of it (as it fell from Himself, for the sake of their stubborn opposition and raving, so that they thought they could keep it against Christ). If not, it shall nevertheless continue, and they (who did not accept it) shall have no excuse, and in vain hope and wait that God will do otherwise with them, and restore their former kingdom and priesthood; as they have now waited and waited in vain for more than five and ten years.

(188) Now to us both it is appointed for doctrine and comfort, that we may be assured and certain that this Christ, whom we know to be born of the tribe of David according to the Scriptures, is truly the King and Priest,

as promised in the Scriptures, and that we who believe in him alone have the right faith, worship and priesthood, and are the right church or God's people, and that before God no other faith or religion nor worship shall be valid but this of Christ and his church, and have comfort in this, whether we are persecuted and condemned because of this priesthood and faith, and both the devil and the world storm and rage against it, and are subject to restrain, that he who has said these things and sworn to them, will also protect and preserve this priesthood, so that the infernal gates shall not overpower it [Matth. 16, 18], as we will hear further on in the word "eternal priest".

But especially this oath serves for the strength and comfort of the poor, afflicted consciences, who are troubled and afflicted with the heavy temptations of God's wrath and despair of the devil, that they may have a firm ground against it, and (as the epistle to the Hebrews says [Cap. 6, 19.]) a secure and firm anchor of our souls, on which they can satisfy their hearts, and certainly rely on the fact that they truly have such a high priest in Christ, who represents them against God, and speaks the best for them [1 John 2, 1. God has not only promised this, which would be enough, since He is true and cannot lie [Joh. 8, 26. 1 Sam. 15, 29. Tit. 1, 2. He has also given and confirmed it with an eternal, irrevocable oath, so that we may hold fast to it and not be torn away from it by any challenge or trouble, but hold such an oath (which the Majesty in heaven Himself has made and does not want to change or alter) higher and more precious than anything our eyes and ears see or hear, and our senses and hearts feel and sense. But more of this hereafter.

190) This oath is also taken from the sayings or promises, which actually speak of the priesthood of Christ, as it happened to Abraham [Gen. 12:3], that in his seed all generations on earth should be blessed. For such blessing is the very priesthood of Christ (as we shall hear). Such a promise will be repeated again.

confirmed by the oath of God [Gen. 22, 16-18], when He says: "By Myself I have sworn that I will bless and multiply Your seed; and in Your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Therefore also such an oath is often referred to in Scripture, and the epistle to the Hebrews on the 6th, v. 13 ff. lays it down abundantly and powerfully, for the comfort of the faithful, as you may read there.

This is one thing that makes the priesthood of Christ glorious and great, that he is consecrated by God and made a priest by a much more glorious profession and anointing than Aaron and other priests, namely, with the solemn oath that sets him apart and exalts him above all others, that his priesthood alone should do and be valid before God. The other is when he speaks:

You are a priest forever, according to the way of Melchizedek.

Hereby he sets a clear distinction between this priesthood of Christ and the old Levitical priesthood, thus tearing and breaking through the whole of Moses, going about it as if he did not want to know anything about it; yes, he diligently adds this addition "after the manner of Melchizedek" to it, lest anyone think and err as if Christ should be a priest like Aaron, and keep such manner of priesthood as was commanded and ordered in the law.

193. This is once again annoying to say and to hear to the Jewish people, who had the defiance and testimony of the Scriptures that their priesthood was instituted and established by God Himself in His way and order, and that there was no other on earth (without this one) that could be called God's foundation and a right priesthood; and this David is allowed to raise up and establish a new, foreign priesthood, of which there is no command nor foundation in the Scriptures; without that in the history of Abraham (which happened long before, before the law and the same priesthood was given) a priest is remembered, who was called Melchizedek [Gen. 14, 18], but nowhere else is it said that such a priest and priesthood should arise again. And it seems that among the Jews such, so of the priest

1) Erlanger: "to" instead of: "with".

Melchizedek is now useless and in vain, as it has long since become obsolete, and they have instead another, better priesthood, conceived and confirmed by God, that they admittedly do not know how to make anything out of this text, nor do they yet know what this way or order of Melchizedek is.

194 But again it seems and is clear that the prophet looks at the Scriptures much differently and with spiritual eyes, and also points us to them so that we can learn to look at and understand them correctly; he shows the right handle, where all Scripture points and points primarily, namely to this promised Christ; therefore we must also look at this history of Melchizedek a little.

195. Gen 14:15 and following, Moses wrote of the wonderful battle and victory that the patriarch Abraham had committed against four mighty kings who had fallen into the land of Sodom and Gomorrah (where his cousin Lot lived) and had smitten everything far and wide, plundering five kings with lands and people, and carrying away captives what they had captured, including Lot, Abraham's cousin, with his wife and children. And it came to pass, when Abraham was told these things, (who dwelt in Hebron at that time as a sojourner and stranger,) that he armed his own servants three hundred and eighteen, and upon his own pay and carriage, without any help of strangers, pursued after the four kings and all their power unto Dan, and thence unto Damascus, (which is nigh unto fifty or sixty German miles,) and smote them, and took, and brought again great spoil, and the captives with their wives and children, and all their substance. When he returned from this battle, and the king of Sodom came to receive him, Melchizedek, the king of Salem, who was a priest of the Most High (Gen. 14:18, Heb. 7:1), came forth and brought bread and wine for Abraham and his people, and blessed him; and Abraham gave him a tithe of all the spoils.

Who this Melchizedek was, I will not argue now. St. Jerome writes from the old Hebrew teachers that it was the old archfather Shem, the son of Noah [Gen. 10, 1.], who was the oldest father at the time, when the five hundred year after

of the flood; and the account gives that he survived his children and descendants to the ninth generation (Gen. 11:10, 11.), and lived thirty-five years after Abraham, until the fiftieth year of the patriarch Jacob; that he was at that time the oldest, most excellent and highest man and held by the pious, as he had seen and heard much of the old fathers (as Enoch and Methuselah) before the first world before the flood, and without doubt after his father Noah, from whom he heard and received God's word, he was the highest and right pope, and God's word was done through him to the other fathers (as, both to Abraham and Isaac).

Therefore I also gladly believe and hold that this Melchizedek was the same holy archfather Sem. For such a priest of the right God (as he is called here) could certainly be none, but who received God's word from the dear old fathers, and the right service of the same drove and heard. And he must not have been a lesser man, that in this oldest history he is specially remembered, and this name "a priest of God the Most High" is given to him. For there has never been a greater, more glorious name and office (as in truth there is no greater honor and more glorious office before God) than to be a priest. That Moses does not praise him without reason, that he was a priest of the most high God. As if to say: There were also many other false, idolatrous priests (as there have always been in the world, from Cain, who was the beginning of it), but this one was the true priest at that time, who taught and practiced God's word and right worship.

198. but that he is called Melchizedek (which means a king of righteousness), he has such a name from his ministry, that he governed the people with God's word, taught them and kept them to live rightly before God and the world, just as St. Peter, almost like this, calls Noah a "preacher of righteousness", 2 Petr. 2, 5, and the pious people with this name also honored this Shem, that he was praised for his righteousness. Peter, almost like this, calls Noah a "preacher of righteousness", 2 Petr. 2, 5. and the pious people with this name have honored and praised this Sem, that he was among the others, who were vain ungodly tyrants and wicked people (like Nimrod of Babylon [Gen. 10, 8.] and those of Sodom and Gomorrah).

(Gen. 19, 4.), is only called a king of righteousness; and without a doubt that is why God gave him such a long life, that through him God's word and the church would be preserved in time. But especially with this name he had to indicate the Lord Christ (as in Hebrews 7, v. 17, this name is used), as the true King of righteousness, who rules us through his priestly office, so that we come to eternal righteousness before God, redeemed by him from sins and the power of the devil.

Now, this history or story the epistle to the Hebrews has diligently considered, and from it interpreted this text: "You are a priest after the manner of Melchizedek", and showed the difference between the priesthood of the New and the Old Testament, and concludes that this priesthood of Christ (so modeled by Melchizedek) must be much higher and better than the Levitical. First of all, this priest Melchizedek blesses the patriarch Abraham and takes the tithe from him [Hebr. 7, 6]. For since he who is blessed is lesser and less, neither he who blesses him, and not the greater is wont to tithe to the lesser, but the subject to the greater, this Melchizedek must be more and greater than Abraham. But if he is greater than Abraham, he must also be greater than Aaron. For Abraham is the highest man among all those whom the Jews can boast of as the head and source or tribe and root of the whole people, and greater than Levi and Aaron, who were born of his blood and flesh. Therefore all who come from him (including Levi with his priesthood) must be under this Melchizedek, who blesses their archfather and highest man, and takes tithes from him. Yes, they themselves are tithed in Abraham (says the same epistle Cap. 7, 9. 10.), since they were still in his loins and not born.

200 Secondly, the same epistle has also noted that this priest Melchizedek is thus briefly remembered, and nothing is said about him, where he came from or where he remained, but neither the beginning nor the end of his lineage and origin are reported, but still

He wrote everything about Aaron with diligence, and his whole lineage from Abraham onward was clearly and differently accounted for, item, how he was called and appointed to the priesthood, yes, also how he died, and to whom the priesthood was inherited. This holy prophet also considered this, and the little word "eternal priest" was derived from this, that, just as this Melchizedek is found without father and mother, beginning or end (not that he had no father and mother, but that nothing is written about it): so Christ (who is modeled by him) is truly such a priest, who did not begin, nor shall he have an end, but is from eternity and remains forever 2c.

If the Jews had opened their eyes and looked rightly into the Scriptures, they would have noticed that their Levitical and Aaron's priesthood with its descendants was not the right lasting priesthood, but should wait for another priest and priesthood, which would be higher and better than both their temporal kingdom and priesthood and all their forefathers had been. For herewith (that he calls Christ "a priest forever after the manner of Melchizedek") he abolishes all that, and throws it under his feet; since the word "priest after the manner of Melchizedek," as being blessed by Abraham, sets him, as [§ 199] said, above Abraham and all his people, even above King David. But the little word "everlasting," that exalts him not alone above Abraham and David, but above all kings and kingdoms, yea, above heaven and earth. For it shows and proves that he must not only be a true man (which the word "priest" implies), but must also be true God, because he is without beginning and end, and before both Abraham and David were; as he also called him his Lord above [v. 1], so long before he was born.

Now this is said of the person of this priest, that he is a different man from Aaron, Abraham, and all the Jewish people. But we must also consider the difference in office between Aaron's and Christ's priesthood. This is also shown by the words: "after the manner of Melchizedek", that is, how

is written and read by Melchizedek. For thus it is written, as [§ 195] said, Gen. 14, 18. when Abraham came from the battle which he had conquered of the five kings, this Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine, and when he was a priest of God, he blessed Abraham with a beautiful, glorious blessing 2c.

Here our papists fell into the text, and did not see anything else in it, neither that which is written of bread and wine. For when they saw the same words, this text had to serve them for their sacrificial mass; they did violence to the text in the Latin interpretation, and read for the word *proferens*, *offerens*; that the word "bore forth" had to mean sacrifice to them. For the text does not say that he sacrificed, but that Abraham with his people, as three hundred and eighteen men, and the captives whom he brought back, being weary and hungry from the long journey, he opened his cellar and kitchen, brought bread and wine, and fed and refreshed them. You hear nothing about the sacrifice he made for himself, but that he gave the people food and drink. Just as Christ instituted the holy sacrament of his body and blood in bread and wine for the Christians, so that they should come together, not to offer it (which he alone, as the true high priest, offered once on the cross [Hebr. 7, 27]), but to eat and drink with one another, which is why St. Paul [1 Cor. 11, 20] calls it "the Lord's Supper" 2c.

But such a wholesome custom of the holy sacrament has had to be perverted and defiled by the pope and his mobs, so that he instigates and carries out his blasphemous idolatry and arch-abomination (as the true anti-Christ) in the holy place (that is, in the Christian church) [Matth. 24, 15.]. For by this he has committed his own sacrilege against this holy priesthood of Christ and his sacrifice, through his smeared and smeared platitudes, that they should not give the sacrament to the Christians in general to eat and drink, as Christ did and commanded to do, but should snatch and offer it to themselves alone.

205. for the common Christian custom of the

The sacrament, which after Christ's institution was administered to the laity (without their taking the one form of it by sacrilege and force), did not have to be called mass nor sacrificed, but only received the sacrament. And praise be to God, who protected them from this, and yet kept the Sacrament in its proper use with them. But the work of the priests, when they traded bread and wine on the altar and kept it for themselves alone, had to be the daily sacrifice for the whole of Christendom to acquire forgiveness of sins; just as if Christ had not done this on the cross, and his sacrifice should now no longer apply and be nothing. And, most disgraceful of all, they have made a public fair out of the mass, since they have sold such sacrifices both to the living on earth and to the dead in the imaginary purgatory; and summa, as the prophet Daniel [Cap. 11, 38] prophesied, they have made such an idol out of it, whom they have served for gold and silver, and have become a veritable money pit, which has snatched up goods from all the world and thrown them to them 2c. But against this abomination of the priests' mass I have said and written enough elsewhere 1).

Here we are to see what the true priesthood of Christ is, according to the way of Melchizedek, which is much a different, higher and better priesthood than that of Moses and Aaron (which was also instituted by God Himself); certainly also much better than that of the pope and his priests, who make their own priesthood without (yes, against) God's and Christ's order and command, and in which nothing is better (does not want to say worse), neither the heathen's nor the Turk's priests. But the difference between this priesthood of Christ and Aaron is this: First, that this is an eternal priesthood, which never ceases, just as the priest himself (Christ, modeled by Melchizedek) is eternal according to his person [Heb. 7:24], which cannot be said of any other priest or priesthood. For Aaron, together with his children and descendants, all had to die, and did not have the promise that there would be

1) "Von dem Greuel der Stillmesse," Walch, Hit. Louis, vol. XIX, 1198.

2) Thus the Wittenberg; Erlangen and Jena: befsers.

eternal; just as it could not, because it was only appointed for the one people of the Jews, and had to do with external, perishable things 2c.

207) Secondly, in the story of Melchizedek it is also shown that he was not a priest according to the law (like Aaron and his family), but a long time before, and before the law was given. And so he has another priestly office, which is not to preach the law, but rather to bless the forefather Abraham and all who came from him, that is, to proclaim and promise God's grace, salvation and blessedness. In the two pieces the right office of Christ and his priesthood of the New Testament is shown.

In order to understand these things better, one must know what a priest is and what the priesthood consists of or what belongs to it. We will see this recently. A priest is called such a person (as the Scriptures paint him), who is appointed and commanded by God to act between God and men, that is, to go forth from Him and bring and teach His word to us; and again, to stand against God and sacrifice and pray for us 2c.

209) Therefore, there are three things that belong to the priesthood, namely, teaching or preaching God's word, sacrificing and praying, 2c. all three of which are often and frequently referred to in Scripture. Whoever does not hold such office, and yet wants to be called a priest or pope, is not worthy of the beautiful, glorious name. As our Pabstlarven and Niclasbischöfe with their smeared and beschornen bunch are, which this noble name with their whole nature and life only desecrate and dishonor, that it is not held so high and noble, as it should be held. For it has always been, and should still be, the highest, most glorious name and title that can be called or praised on earth, and the highest honor next to the divine majesty; for God is also the closest person, so he himself honors and praises the highest. Hence also the priests by Malachia Cap. 2, 7. are called God's angels, since he says: "The priest's lips shall keep the teaching, that one may seek the law from his mouth; for he is an angel of the Lord", as the one given by God Himself.

and receives from him the calling and the office to teach the people. And in turn, brings and carries his sacrifice and prayer for the people up before God.

The first office of a priest is to be called, consecrated and anointed by God Himself to teach the people such doctrine and word as is not his own, but the word of God. But it must be such a sermon and word that not only teaches us (like Moses with his priests) by demanding and doing the Law or the Ten Commandments, how we should live and do toward God, but also shows and tells us what God wants to give us and do with us, so that we may do this. For if only the one part (the preaching of the law) were taught and practiced, we would not be helped, and the right office that a priest is supposed to do (namely, to bring us to God through him and to make us pleasant and holy with him) would not be accomplished. For since we are not able to keep the Ten Commandments (which are indeed a delicious, divine teaching) in this depraved, sinful nature, which was inherited by us through Adam's fall, such preaching and demanding (if it were done alone) would be in vain, yes, would only be enough to condemn us (as St. Paul [1 Cor. Paul [1 Cor. 15, 56] says that the law is the power of sins and only causes wrath [Rom. 4, 15]), and could therefore never come to God, nor be reconciled, but would only be further separated from Him.

211. But if the right priesthood is to be established and carried out, for which it was instituted and ordained by God, that we may be reconciled to Him and become one, then such a word must be brought and preached to us, which not only says what we are and should do (which we are not able to do), and thus only proclaims wrath, but also shows how we may come from sin and wrath, in which we are, to grace and righteousness. For this reason Aaron and his priests have not yet performed the right priestly office, in that they preached and practiced the law. For it is not yet what a priest should do, that he should bring people to God. It is also necessary to preach and drive, so that the people learn to recognize their sin, and through it, to be frightened and to be under the spell of God.

be driven to groan for grace and reconciliation. For where sin and God's wrath are not recognized or felt, repentance and forgiveness cannot come. That is why Christ himself and the apostles began with the preaching of repentance, thus confirming the preaching of the law. For this reason, the law had to go before this priest Christ and had to be practiced by Moses and his priests among his people, so that they would be prepared for Christ.

And although their priestly office was primarily to keep the law, both with its promises and punishments, they also had the promise of Christ and his gospel. For the sake of which the whole nation, with its priesthood and whole service, was chosen and set apart by God to keep the promise of the future Christ and His gospel until He Himself came and spread them throughout the world.

Although such a teaching office was established among them more by the prophets than by the priests, whom God especially awakened and gave to lead both, the preaching of the law, according to its right custom and work, namely to punish sin and to drive to repentance, and besides that to further spread the promise of Christ (given to the fathers), and to prophesy and proclaim gloriously about his right priesthood, so that they led the right priesthood in that part. Meanwhile the other Levitical priests mostly dealt with their sacrifice and outward service, which were nothing else 1) but shadows and images of the future priesthood of Christ and his sacrifice, and for this reason also the priestly name was given to them, to indicate in such images and shadows that the true priest, the promised Christ, should come, who by his sacrifice would reconcile all men, and preach and let this out into all the world through the gospel. Therefore, after the coming of Christ himself, the outward Jewish priesthood has ceased.

214. From this you see that the proper priestly office is actually to preach the gospel, which is nothing else than a public preaching of God's grace and forgiveness of sins, which Christ himself commanded to be preached and given publicly, in general, and everywhere, to all who believe in him. And this is called the proper office of the New Testament, to have and to execute such a command and office, given by Christ, to proclaim forgiveness of sins; and thus such priestly office actually belongs to Christ himself, and even springs and flows from him. For he alone is the person for whom and on whose account God's grace and forgiveness are given to us. Thus he also began and led in his own person such a public ministry of preaching the gospel on earth, and commanded the apostles to spread it into all the world until the last day, and is himself the high priest, from whom alone this ministry proceeds, and also preaches from him alone, so that in the New Testament no priesthood should be or apply apart from him, or otherwise, than preaches from him.

215 Such priesthood is now shown by Melchizedek, Genesis 14:19, in that he blessed Abraham, so that he is not only a figure or image of Christ and His priesthood, but has truly practiced the same office as a preacher of the gospel, and therefore is also called a priest of God, since Aaron's priesthood was not yet. For the fact that he blesses Abraham is nothing other than that he promises and promises him God's grace, help and protection. And he takes such a blessing from the promise that was made to Abraham by Christ, that from him should be born the seed in which all the world should be blessed [Gen. 12:3, 22, 18, 26:4]. Because he had such a promise and believed in it, Melchizedek said to him [Gen. 14:19, 20], "Blessed art thou, Abram, to the most high God, and praised be God, who hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand." 2c. And Abraham also accepted and believed such a blessing, as such a sermon, which proclaimed to him forgiveness of sin, grace and help from God. Such preaching then continued and went on from Abraham to

1) In the issues: "which were not different."

His descendants, Isaac, Jacob, and through all the prophets and holy fathers, who preached and proclaimed this promise of blessing in Christ, and all received it through faith, until Christ came and fulfilled that which was believed of Him, and afterward had it preached publicly in the world, so that it would be known and believed everywhere.

This is enough of the first part of the priestly office. The other two are the same, namely, sacrifice and prayer. For a priest is appointed (says the Epistle to the Hebrews Cap. 5, 1.) to sacrifice for the sin of men, that he may obtain atonement and forgiveness for them with God, and such office was especially commanded by God through Moses [to] Aaron and his sons. For the ministry of preaching (as now said) is more through the prophets than through them. This office also actually belongs to Christ, and also remains on his person alone, that he himself, as the high priest, must make the sacrifice for our sin, so that we might be reconciled to God. For there is no other person nor sacrifice by which sin can be taken away and purged; as this same epistle powerfully proves, Cap. 10, 4. That Aaron did not take away sin with his sacrifice, "because it is impossible to take away sin with the blood of oxen and goats," and he himself, together with the other priests, was not without sin, nor could he be, so that they had to sacrifice for themselves all the time, and he had to go every year anew with blood into the holy place for his sin, so that they confessed that they could not yet be free from sin, nor be pure, as long as they lived. 2c.

But if these priests with their sacrifice, since both persons and office were commanded and instituted by God, could not take away sin and bring forgiveness, much less can sin be paid for and enough done or forgiveness obtained by a single human work, self-chosen worship services, priestly masses and monasticism, for which the pope has falsely and blasphemously raised and praised his own priesthood against Christ. But this Christ is the only priest, appointed by God to reconcile us against God and to obtain forgiveness.

and he did not make his sacrifice out of his own intention or devotion, but out of God's command and obedience. Therefore he also has the certain testimony that his sacrifice is pleasing and acceptable to God, because he is without all sin and guilt, that everything he does is delicious in the sight of God and heartily pleasing to Him [Heb. 7:26].

Therefore, it is much different sacrifice than that priest was, with their ox and goat blood, 2c. which was (as [§213] said) only an example. But because it shows that no reconciliation or forgiveness with God could take place without blood and death, as the epistle to the Hebrews says on the 9th, v. 22, this priest's sacrifice of Christ also had to take place through the shedding of blood, not of another's, but of his own innocent blood. Such he once offered for all the sins of the world, by his death on the cross [Hebr. 7, 27. 10, 14.], which was the altar on which he presented such a living, holy sacrifice of his body and blood to God the Father with fervent prayer, great crying, and hot, fearful tears, consumed by the fire of causeless love that burned from his heart [Cap. 5, 7.].

This is the true sacrifice, which takes away and blots out all the sin of the world at once, and brings eternal reconciliation and forgiveness. This is to be praised with all honors, to be exalted and magnified, especially against other false sacrifices of lies of our own works, invented to deny and blaspheme this sacrifice. For this is also the priest, who may well be called a priest in the sight of all; who will or can exalt and praise him highly enough, who is called and is truly, the only Son of God? He willingly and freely put Himself in the middle between God's wrath and our sin [Gal. 1, 4. 1 Tim. 2, 5.], and offered Himself as a sacrifice or payment through His blood and death, and so that both of these were so far and high outweighed that no sin, wrath, hell or damnation could be so great and heavy, this holy sacrifice is even higher and greater.

220. so he also fulfilled the third part of the priesthood, which is to pray; since he, besides and above his sacrifice, also made his prayer to God the Father for all of us; as also Isaiah Cap. 53, 12. of such a prayer.

In his priesthood he says: "He bore the sins of many, and prayed for the transgressors and sinners. And Hebr. 5, 7: "In the day of his flesh he offered up prayer and supplication, and was heard, because he honored God. For this was due to him alone, because he alone was the one who could come before God without means, and had the right and power to pray, and also alone had this testimony that his prayer should be heard and yes, because the Father says of him, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 2c. [Matth. 3, 17. 17, 5.] So he made the beautiful and heartfelt prayer for all of Christendom Joh. 17, 20. and through such prayer he acquired and shared with us the power and merit of his sacrifice, namely forgiveness of sins, righteousness and eternal life 2c. And such prayer is eternal, and its power is effective in all of Christendom. Item, he still leads this ministry, that he is our mediator and intercessor before God, as St. Paul says Rom. 8, 34 [1 Joh. 2, 1].

For though it is enough that he once made the sacrifice for all the sins of the world until the last day, yet because we are still in sins and weak, he must represent us to the Father without ceasing and plead that such sin and weakness not be imputed to us, and give strength and power of the Holy Spirit against it. For this reason he went up to heaven and sat down at the right hand of God, so that through his intercession he might keep us forever in grace with God and give us strength and victory against the terrors of sin, the devil, the world and the temptations of the flesh. And not only does he pray for us, but he also gives us that we may and can pray to God ourselves, and carry our prayer before God, and assure us that such prayer for his sake is pleasing to God and will be heard. As He promised [John 16:23]: "Whatever you ask the Father in My name, He will give you" 2c.

222) Behold, this is the priesthood of this Lord Christ, which he calls here "after the manner of Melchizedek"; that is, not only as Aaron and his generation, with the preaching and teaching of the law and outward worship, sacrifice and holiness deal, which are

The priest of the Lord has not been a mere image and sign of what is to come, but has led the right office, as a right priest should lead, and has proven through his power and deeds that what is indicated and signified in the images and shadows is truly given through him. For he proclaims such word and sermon, in which he promises us God's grace and forgiveness of sins, and thus brings and gives us the right priestly blessing. In addition, he also offered the right priestly sacrifice for us, which has the power to reconcile God and to take away our sin from us, and also represents us to God through his intercession, so that we may remain and be preserved in the same reconciliation and grace.

The priesthood of Christ is the right, high comfort for all poor sinful people and for all sorrowful hearts. For in it we hear and see that in his kingdom on earth he does not have such excellent saints who are completely pure from sins and perfectly holy, but his rule and the highest office, which acts before God, is done in such a way that he deals with those who are weak, infirm and sinners, and have a heavy and sorrowful conscience, and does not want to push such away from him, nor deal with them severely and strictly, with the dread and terror of wrath and condemnation, but most kindly, sweetly and sweetly entices and tempts such to come to him and to seek and wait for comfort and help from him; as he says Matth. 11:28: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." 2c. Item, Cap. 9, 13. "I am come to call the sinners, and not the righteous."

For a priest is such a person, who is appointed for the sake of sinners alone, and must take care of them, so that he may intervene between God and them, and make atonement for them and forbid them; otherwise a priest should not be allowed anywhere where the people are holy and not sinners beforehand, for whom he must sacrifice and pray. Therefore, if we consider this Lord Christ to be a priest and want to accept him, we must confess that we are sinners and believe that he has been set up and given to us as a priest by God for this reason, so that we may seek comfort and help from him against sin, and so that we may be able to find the Lord's help.

as the one who gave himself as a sacrifice for us, so that he might reconcile us before God and bring us to grace, and that through his intercession he might obtain and give us the spirit and power to be freed from sin and thus attain eternal righteousness, holiness and life [1 Pet 2:24].

(225) Therefore we must learn to use this priesthood for our comfort and strength, through faith, which assures us that we truly have in Christ such a high priest, who gives us his word or preaching of the gospel, that is, of divine blessing and grace, and thereby assures us of the forgiveness of sins and inheritance of eternal life, which he has earned and purchased for us through his sacrifice. For this purpose he stands before the Father daily and without ceasing, and speaks the best for us, and brings all our troubles before him [Rom. 8, 34]. And indeed, there is no doubt that such intercession of his is heartily pleasing to the Father, and obtains for us what he asks of him; moreover, it also gives us such power that we may also come before God and pray in his name [1 John 5:14], and makes such our prayer pleasant and pleasing that it must be heard and yes.

What can be more glorious and higher for us than to have such a man as our High Priest, who is the Son of God Himself, seated in majesty at the right hand of God? And what could or would we, should we ourselves desire, desire greater and better than to have such a mediator and intercessor against GOD? Now we hear that God Himself has appointed this Christ, yes, confirmed Him with His high oath (as is said [§ 185 ff.]), that He should be such a high priest, and therefore sit at the right hand of the Father, so that we should fear neither wrath nor disfavor, if we believe in Him, but provide us with eternal, fatherly grace, comfort and help.

For how can or should he not hear this priest, his one, dear Son? How can he deny him, or make him lack what he asks? Now he asks nothing else but for us, that we may obtain grace and mercy, and we are sure, if we ask such things ourselves, for his sake, that it is pleasing to God and fully heard. Why

Do we still want to doubt or fear? Why do we not come before him with all joy to such a mercy seat (as the epistle to the Hebrews says Cap. 4, 16), and warmly rejoice and comfort ourselves in this high priest? 1) Let us see how this holy prophet of his rejoices and boasts here, for he certainly speaks these words out of a rich, strong spirit and faith, and hereby confesses that he considers this Christ to be his right priest before God, through whom he truly has forgiveness of sins and a gracious God, and has comforted himself against all terror and temptation, suffering and hardship, and is also preserved thereby, both in life and death.

228] Summa, that we may come once to the end, it is in this verse, since he calls it "priest forever" or eternal priest, a great, rich fountain, yes, treasure and treasure trove of all Christian doctrine, understanding, wisdom and comfort, as nowhere else in the Scriptures in one place is so rich and complete with one another. For herein is fully given, as [§ 199] said, the difference of the Old and New Testament, and all is shown what our faith holds and teaches.

For first, he describes (as stated above [§ 201]) the person of this priest much differently from all others, namely, that he alone is both true God and true man, in one, unseparated person, and gives him everything that belongs to these two natures, divine and human. For since he is our priest, and mediator between God and us [1 Tim. 2, 5.], he must also be a man, of our nature, flesh and blood, since (as the epistle to the Hebrews Cap. 5, 1. says) "every high priest is taken from among men, and set apart for men against God". Again, because he is called an eternal priest, as he is eternal for his person, he must be truly God. But if he should be

1) Here, the Erlanger has adopted Walch's alteration: "und wollen uns dieses Hohenpriesters nicht herzlich" 2c., instead of the reading of the original and the other editions set by us. The alteration expresses the meaning, but is not necessary, because the original reading has only inverted word order, instead of: und freuen uns herzlich und trösten uns dieses Hohenpriesters?

to be the one who reconciles us to God and heals us from sins, he had to be conceived and born pure without any sin; and yet, if he, as the high priest, should take our sin upon himself and pay for it, he had to shed his blood and die [Hebr. 9, 22]. But because the true divine nature was in him, and his priesthood was to remain forever, he could not remain in death and the grave [Acts 2:24], but had to rise from the dead and enter into another, eternal life, where he can be our priest with the Father without end.

230 Secondly, because this person is eternal, and lives as the Lord of all creatures, and has all things powerfully in his hand, he must also give to those of whom he is a priest (that is, to us men) his eternal goods, namely, that through him we may have redemption from sin, death, and all power of the devil and all evil, and also that we may be made in us a completely new nature and being, that we may also be raised from the dead, both in body and soul, completely pure and perfect, living with him in eternal glory. For this cause he became our priest, and did all things, that we might obtain and have these things of and through him. No other priesthood can and never has been able to do this, not even Moses, who was ordained by God; much less any other person, service, holiness, wisdom, nor authority and power on earth. For since all these things, both person and what they have, are temporal and transitory, that they must die and cease, they cannot create or give such an eternal thing. Therefore, all these things have been abolished here, and the glory that should be before God has been taken away from him, and all things have been drawn into this one person, so that faith may adhere entirely to him alone, and obtain all that we are to have from God, which belongs to eternal righteousness and eternal life.

231 Thirdly, there is also the article of the Christian church, that it should remain on earth forever, and that the ministry of the gospel, baptism and sacrament, and the power thereof, should continue as long as the world stands. For if he is to be a priest forever, he must always have a people or a congregation,

In whom his priesthood is recognized and who believe in him, preach about him, and confess his name with word and life, walk in his power. For if he no longer had such a group, he could no longer be called a priest. Therefore he preserves Christianity on earth until the last day, against all power and authority that fights and rages against it; And in it he reigns as a priest or true pope, through the ministry of preaching and the power of the Holy Spirit, so that even in this life he may begin to make new men of us, and communicate his eternal divine goods to us, that here we may all have daily and eternal forgiveness of sins, and may work in us power and strength, and conquest of death, the devil, and hell, and may bring about eternal righteousness and life.

232 Therefore, although he has gone to heaven and no longer preaches personally or bodily on earth, he has not ceased to speak through his apostles and their descendants, and will not cease to speak and to spread his gospel further and further, and to work powerfully in them through the Holy Spirit: Holy Spirit to work powerfully in the same. For if he did not himself do this mightily, the whole Scripture, preaching chair, baptism, sacrament, together with the name of Christ, would have long since been eradicated and wiped out. And if he did not himself drive and sustain our hearts through his Holy Spirit, no man would believe the gospel or remain in it.

How purely the devil has swept up and exterminated the gospel and the Christian faith in Greece, through Mahomet and the Turks! They did not lack fine, learned, reasonable and pious people; as they still have many fine, great, wise people. But this has done the damage, and devastated and ruined everything, so that Christ has ceased to preach there. Which is not the fault of the devil nor of his 1) Mahomet's raging, blustering and malice, but of the grievous ingratitude and contempt of the gospel among those who have it, and yet do not think with earnestness and sorrow how they may keep it: as then Rome and the

1) Wittenberg and Jena: his.

Because they no longer want to hear Christ, but have begun to preach themselves, and have raised their own priesthood, worship, sacrifice and holiness apart from Christ, he is also silent. For where they preach of our own merit, monasticism, indulgences, masses, pilgrimages, purgatory, Christ is gone, and there can be no faith, nor spirit, nor Christian church there; without God nevertheless having hitherto raised up the name of Christ, the Scripture and text of the Gospel, baptism, sacrament and absolution for the sake of his elect, whom he miraculously saved in this Sodoma and Babylon of ours, and now has again brought forth the right doctrine, that he may be heard speaking again.

Therefore it is his work and power alone that the gospel, faith and the true church remain in the world, and he himself, both of them, puts his word into the mouth and heart, so that it may be preached and accepted. And if in one place he will not be heard, nor suffer, in another he will come. Just as he preached on earth from one city to another, and commanded his apostles to go into all the world [Marc. 16, 15.], so he does not cease to walk through the world with his gospel until the last day. Jerusalem, Greece and Rome did not want to suffer him, so he came to us; and where we also do not want to hear him, he will find others who will hear him.

Behold, this is the glory, power and authority of this eternal priesthood of Christ, how therein is all our comfort, and what is to be preached and believed for our salvation: that whoever could take this into his heart and keep it, would have comfort and joy enough, and could not be afraid all his life long. For here he hears that Christ, the Son of God, should and will be our priest, not for an hour or a day, and his mass or priestly office should not last as short as a papal priest's mass; but he is priest from the day he became Christ, and began to offer his body, and still presents such sacrifice to the Father, and thereby forbids us without ceasing, until the end of the world.

Who wants to or can harm us, if we have this mediator and intercessor with God in heaven? Who wants to accuse or condemn us (says St. Paul Rom. 8, 34.), if God's Son represents us and justifies us? And in short, who is he who is against us, if he himself stands for us? Where God is gracious, there happiness strikes, whether all the world is angry. If I may not fear God, why do I ask for the devil's wrath and terror? If Christ, my Lord, protects me, what harm can the enemy do me? If God himself fights for me, who will overcome me?

From all this you see what a shameful and harmful abomination it is for the Pope's doctrine, since people have been taught nothing at all about this priesthood of Christ, and even, to contradict it, have held him up as a terrible judge, and have so imagined his severe and serious wrath that they have had to flee from him, and have driven this so deeply into their hearts that I and others were frightened when we heard the name of Christ. For we were all instructed that we ourselves must be sufficient for our sin, and Christ on the last day would demand from us an account of how we had atoned for our sin and how many good works we had done.

237 And because we could never do enough penance and deeds, but were always terrified and afraid of his wrath, they directed us to the saints in heaven, who were to be mediators between Christ and us; they taught us to call upon the dear Mother of Christ, and to admonish her of the breasts she had given to her Son, that she might abate his wrath against us, and obtain his mercy. And where our dear Lady was not enough, we took to our aid the apostles and other saints, until at last we came to the saints, whom one does not know whether they are saints, indeed, most of whom have never been. St. Anne, St. Barbara, St. Christopher, St. George 2c., all of them had to be called upon as intercessors and helpers in need; pilgrimages were made to them, masses were offered, and the pope gave indulgences and blessings.

And what do they do in their daily parish mass? Precisely when they perform the reverend sacrament and say the words

In the same moment, they both turn their words and hearts around and ask God to be merciful to them, not for the sake of the same sacrifice that Christ made, but for the sake of their work, that they offer Christ's body and blood anew (as they themselves blaspheme) and immediately fall upon the intercession of Mary and other saints, who are to be mediators before God. Thus, instead of the priesthood of Christ, they have erected a priesthood of their own, contrary to it.

After that, the monks approached and wanted to improve such sacrifices with their monasticism, and boasted that if one of them said his first mass, he would give birth to a virgin (thus the devil himself mocked her). And whoever enters a monastery sacrifices both his body and soul to God; the body through poverty and chastity, the soul through obedience and denial of himself; yes, he would become as pure and innocent in the monastery when he puts on the cap as if he were coming out of baptism. They made vain sacrifices of all this, so that they might earn not only for themselves but also for others, and told them that whoever wished to be saved would have to buy their mass and monastic earnings for money; until at last they succeeded in persuading people to put on the cap at the place of death and to be buried in it, but with the understanding that they would have to give them enough money for it.

240. Behold, is not this an abomination upon abominations, and an outrageous, wanton blasphemy and mockery of this priest of Christ, and of his sacrifice and merit? Such a fruit is the whole Pabstry, as a mother of all abominations and fornications, as St. John Revelation 17, v. 5, says of her, that on her forehead are written the names of blasphemy, that is, so many, innumerable, self-chosen services and works, which she at all times publicly and insolently praised and raised up for sacrifices, to the oppression of the sacrifice of Christ, and to the miserable harm and destruction of souls. It must have been a great wrath, and more terrible, than any one

can believe or pronounce. It would be no wonder that God would have long since reduced the bets to ashes with fire from heaven for such blasphemy, and it would still be desirable that He would strike all monasteries, convents and churches into a heap with thunder and lightning, the sooner the better, since one does not want to desist from such blasphemy, and even knowingly defend it.

241. But so it goes, and so it must go, where this priest, Christ, does not preach and teach himself, and men subject themselves to govern the church in his stead; as the pope has done: That it may well be seen how it is his own work and deed alone that right doctrine, faith, and divine service are carried out, and that his church or Christianity is rightly governed and preserved, otherwise such a misery will certainly result that one will forget this priest altogether, and instead seek and choose his own priesthood and sacrifices, until it is all filled with vain abominations, idolatry, and blasphemy against Christ. For where this priest is lacking, human reason and wisdom can come no higher than to atone for sin, to obtain grace and salvation through their own work, strict and hard life, or through the merit of other people who pray and sacrifice for them.

Now we have heard here again in this verse that Christ alone is and shall be the only true priest before God for eternity, and that which is not the priest's shall not be valid before God. For the two cannot and do not go together, Christ's merit and sacrifice, and my own sacrifice and work; one alone must do it, either Christ, or my own work. If he is to be our priest, and by his sacrifice and intercession reconcile us and bring us to God, our own sacrifice and work will not achieve this, for it is not Christ nor his sacrifice. But if it is our sacrifice and work that is to do it, then Christ with his priesthood, suffering, death and everything is in vain, and this verse is denied and blasphemed. For what may I add to Christ's sacrifice, if I think I have or deserve it in myself and through myself?

That is enough, and probably too much, of this verse. Now I should also say something about how we Christians are also priests. For whether

Although Christ is the only high priest between God and all of us, he also gives us this name, so that we who believe in him may also be and be called priests, just as we are called Christians after him.

244 But here a distinction must be made between the office or service of bishops, pastors, and preachers, and that of common Christians. For pastors and preachers are indeed in the office of the church, but they are not priests (as the Scriptures call sacerdotes, or priests); just as they are not Christians. For since we have heard that we have no other high priest than Christ, the Son of God, our Lord, no one else can be called a priest, either from and through Christ, as a child of his Father, having such a name and right as a native inheritance, so that those who are to be priests must be children born of this priest, and those who are born of him are and shall be called all priests.

Now he said above [§163 ff] that he should have children and heirs, not by man and woman, natural or human, but by a spiritual, heavenly birth, without human intervention, only by divine work, which he does through the gospel and holy baptism. Such children are true priests' children and inherit the same name from their father. Therefore every baptized Christian is already a priest; not ordained or made so by a priest or man, but begotten and born a priest by Christ Himself in baptism.

This is necessary to know, also for the sake of the papal abomination, which has taken the name of "priest" only on its own resembling and shameless bunch, and have thereby separated and separated themselves from the common Christians, and called themselves only clerum Dei, God's inheritance and chosen people, who have to help other Christians by their sacrifice and worship. Yes, that is why they impudently say in their decree translato sacerdotio etc. that Christ has transferred his priesthood to St. Peter, and St. Peter to the chair of Rome, so that the priesthood

Now he alone stands with him, and he alone has power and right to set and do what he wills. Is this not a blatant lie and blasphemy, that they may publicly teach that Christ has given up his priesthood and transferred it? just as if we were no longer allowed to be priests, and that he now sits idle in heaven and has nothing to do with us; in direct contradiction to this verse, which says: "You are a priest forever.

Dear, what kind of priests would St. Peter be, and all the popes with their priests, if Christ himself were not and did not remain the high priest? I would not look at St. Peter (much less the pope at Rome) if I did not have Christ himself, and should have another as priest in his place. But so the pope, as a true anti-Christian, should throw away Christ with his priesthood, prove the Scriptures false, and strike the Holy Spirit in the mouth; then raise up a priesthood of his own, of which Christ, nor the Scriptures, knows nothing.

Therefore we Christians should hold fast to this, and know that Christ has never thrown away his priesthood, nor laid down the office, nor given it to others, but is and remains the true priest before God, speaking to us there, sacrificing and praying for us forever, and neither St. Peter nor any man on earth is a priest, as if Christ had ceased to be a priest, or had given him over to be a priest in his place. God forbid that we should have another priest! For if we did not have this mediator before God, we would all be condemned and lost, with all our own actions, holiness and worship.

Now it is he alone, and must be he alone, who brings us to God through his own priesthood, and also communicates it to us. And as we all enjoy the power of his priesthood for our comfort and salvation, so that not only St. Peter or the apostles, nor pope and bishops, are made partakers of it, but all who are to be saved, so he also imparts the same name to all Christians, that as they are called children and heirs of God through him [Gal. 3, 26. 4, 7.], so they are also called priests after him, and so every baptized Christian is both a priest and called a priest.

than St. Peter or St. Paul. For the fact that St. Peter is a priest is due to the fact that he believed in Christ, as I also am. So we all (as I said) became priests' children in baptism [1 Petr. 2, 9. Revelation 1, 6. 5, 10. 20, 6.]. Therefore, as common as the name Christian is, and as common as God's child is (namely, of all who believe in Christ), so common should also be and be understood the name priest. For we all have at the same time and in common one baptism, gospel, one grace and inheritance of the kingdom of heaven, one Holy Spirit, one God the Father and Lord Christ [Eph. 4, 4-6], and are all one in him; as he says John 17, v. 22, and St. Paul Gal. 3, 28: "You are all one in Christ JEsu" 2c.

250 This is said of the priesthood, which is a common good of all Christians. But it is another thing to say of those who have an office in Christendom, as church ministers, preachers, pastors, or pastoral caretakers. These are not priests (as the Scriptures use to call priests) for the sake of the profession or office which they have, but are so already before their office, from their baptism; and are called in Scripture ministers, bishops, that is, overseers, or, as the apostles call them, presbyters, seniores, that is, elders [1 Cor. 4:1, 1 Tim. 3:2, Tit. 1:5]. For the word presbyter means nothing else than an old man, hence that the best men were chosen for such office, who had come to their age, were well tried, learned, practiced and experienced. As is proper in all regiments, and Scripture commands that such people be elected.

251 These are therefore chosen and separated from the common group of Christians in the church for the sake of office alone, no differently than how some officials are chosen and appointed in secular government from a whole citizenry or community. There, a person does not become a citizen because he is elected mayor or judge, but because he has the right of citizenship beforehand, and is a member of the entire citizenry, he is then elected to office, thus bringing his citizenship with him into the mayoralty. So also, a woman or wife in the house does not become a woman because she takes a husband.

For if she were not first a woman's image, she would never become a housewife through marital union, but she brings her feminine nature into the marriage state, after which she receives the keys to the house. The same is true of all other offices and positions, such as father, mother, schoolmaster, magistrate, and office; there the office does not give the nature and right that each one has, but the same must first be there from birth, and make him fit for it, so that he can hold the office. For God has made and created it so that we must first be born men, male or female; but after that he gives each one his office and position as he wants, and knows how to divide them in various ways.

252 So it is in Christendom also. Every man must first be a Christian and a born priest before he becomes a preacher or bishop, and neither the pope nor any man can make him a priest. But if he is born a priest by baptism, then comes the ministry after that, and makes a difference between him and other Christians. For there must be taken out of the whole multitude of Christians some who are to preside over others, to whom God gives special gifts and skill, that they may be fit for the office. As St. Paul says in Eph. 4:11, 12: "He gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors and teachers, that the saints (that is, those who are already Christians and baptized priests) might be sent to the work of the ministry or service, by which the body of Christ (that is, the Christian congregation or church) might be built up.

For though we are all priests, yet we cannot and ought not all preach, or teach, or govern; but some must be separated and chosen out of the whole multitude, to whom such office shall be committed. And he who has this office is not a priest for the sake of the office (as the others all are), but a servant of the others of all. And if he can or will no longer preach and serve, he rejoins the common multitude, commands the office to another, and is nothing else than any common Christian.

(254) Thus the office of preaching or ministry must be separated from the common priesthood of all baptized Christians. For such an office is no more than a public service, if it is commanded by the whole congregation, who are all priests at the same time.

(255) Do you ask what the priesthood of Christians consists in, or what are their priestly works? Answer: Just the same as those mentioned above [§ 209 ff.], namely, teaching, sacrificing and praying. But this must be known, as I have said [§ 242 f.], that Christ is the only high priest, which priestly office we must have beforehand, as having been given to us for our benefit, yes, given to us as our own, before we do such priestly works afterward. For from Him I have the doctrine and preaching which He brought from heaven, that we might be saved; so also He alone has done and accomplished the sacrifice for us all, that we might be reconciled to God [Rom. 5:10]. So he is also the only one who pleads for us all before God without means, without which mediator no prayer is valid before God 2c.

(256) If we have become Christians through this priest and his priesthood, and have been incorporated into him through faith in baptism, we also have the right and authority to teach and confess the word we have from him to everyone, each according to his profession and position. For even though we are not all in public office and profession, every Christian should and may teach, instruct, admonish, comfort, and punish his neighbor by the word of God, when and where anyone needs it; as father and mother their children and servants, one brother, neighbor, citizen, or farmer another. For a Christian of the Ten Commandments, of faith, of prayer, 2c. can instruct or admonish another who is still ignorant or weak, and he who hears it is obliged to accept it as God's word from him, and to confess it publicly.

257 So also Christians have and practice their priestly sacrifice, not so that they may obtain forgiveness of sins for themselves or others; for this they have only through Christ's sacrifice, which alone is for reconciliation for all men, but such sacrifices so that they may praise God and

praise. These are the sacrifices of which St. Paul says Rom. 12, 1: "I exhort you, brethren, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" 2c. Such sacrifice is in the cross and suffering. For if we are to confess Christ, we must risk our goods, honor, body and life. Therefore, if such things are taken from us for the sake of confession, it is rightly called our body, life, goods, and honor sacrificed to God. And these are the right sacrifices, which are pleasing to God and a sweet savor. For they are done for God's praise and honor, and for the people's good example 2c.

Such sacrifices were strongly practiced and practiced in the time of the dear martyrs, who gave their bodies and lives for the confession of Christ, not only the bishops and preachers who presided over others, but also young children and virgins (as St. Agnes, a maiden of thirteen years). These were all true holy priests and priestesses, who sacrificed their bodies and honored God with such service and obedience, strengthening and comforting others with their example. According to this, all Christian lives, deeds and sufferings are holy, pleasing sacrifices before God, if they are done in faith, so that through his sacrifice we may have forgiveness of sins and please God, and are done so that God may be praised and honored, and others may be corrected, and also that God may be praised and thanked [Matth. 5, 16].

In addition to such sacrifice, Christians also pray, for they are driven to do so by all kinds of suffering and affliction. They do not pray on themselves or on their own merit, but on the mediator Christ, who carries their prayer before God and makes it acceptable and heard by Him. And this is the high honor of Christians, that we are so highly consecrated and dignified by Christ that we are allowed to come before God and pray. For those who are not Christians cannot and do not know how to teach, pray or sacrifice properly, even though they boast and boast a lot, want to teach and master all the world, sacrifice day and night in the churches, chatter, sing and make noise; for they do not have this mediator and high priest,

from which it must flow, and everything is valid through him alone before God. But that a young baptized child says his ten commandments, faith and Our Father in the morning, in the evening, and over the table, that is rightly prayed and heard by God; for he prays as a Christian and priest, born in baptism and consecrated by Christ.

(260) Thus every Christian has and practices such priestly works. But over this is the common office, which publicly leads and drives the teaching, to this belong pastors and preachers. For in the congregation they cannot all attend to the office; nor is it fitting to baptize and administer the sacrament in every house. Therefore, some must be chosen and appointed to preach and to practice the Scriptures, who can lead the teaching office and defend it; item, the sacraments must be administered on behalf of the congregation, so that it is known who has been baptized and everything is done properly. Otherwise a church would slowly become, or be appointed, where each neighbor preached to the other, or did everything among themselves without order. Such, however, is not the priesthood in itself, but a common public office for those who are all priests, that is, Christians. But more than enough of this. Now follows in the Psalm:

V. 5 The LORD at your right hand will smite the kings in the time of his wrath.

The holy prophet has so far prophesied gloriously, both of the kingdom and eternal priesthood of Christ, for the consolation of all miserable, poor sinners and afflicted hearts, and has presented this dear man in such a way that it could not be made any sweeter. For that we hear how we have in him a pious, faithful, dear bishop and advocate up in heaven, against divine wrath and eternal death, to whom we shall have our refuge in our last needs, and know that he will not forget us, nor cease to represent us: of this all men should indeed rejoice and be comforted, and accept this Lord with great thanksgiving, reverence and obedience.

262 But this verse says how the world shows itself against such a king and priest, and how the world shows itself against such a king and priest.

He will thank him, namely, that the 1) power on earth will set itself against him in a spurious manner, and will be obliged to destroy his kingdom; but that God himself must do this by force, so that he will defend this priest and all of us who believe in him. For there shall rise up against him, not one or two peasants, or lowly and loose men, but the proper authorities of the earth, which are called lords and kings; not murderers or tramps, but the high and mighty lords, which rule the world, and have their authority from God. If reckless men and wicked men did it, it would not be a great wonder, but it is strange that they should do it, who are the highest, wisest and best in the world. For when he calls them kings, he is referring to the right, orderly rule set by God; the highest authority, wisdom, prudence, and core of the best 2) on earth; as David also laments and says in another Psalm, v. 1, 2: "Why do the nations rage, and the people speak in vain? The kings of the land rebel, and the lords counsel with one another against the Lord and his anointed."

We must also know and be accustomed to this. As comforting as this sermon is about Christ, our king and priest, against sin, death and the devil, it must still be met with the fact that people do not want to suffer this same priest and king, when they can otherwise suffer all kinds of idolatry and error, and that this king's enemies should be precisely those who are the very best. This is an abominable, shameful thing, that they should set themselves against their own Lord, who wants to redeem them and help them. And who could believe such a thing to be possible if we did not see it before our eyes? Everyone thinks: Who would want to be such a foolish, even cursed, devilish man, who would not gladly hear and accept this sermon? Yes, who would not run after it for a hundred miles, and fall against it on foot? But now we see and learn how many pious Christians have been judged, burned, drowned, murdered and chased away in all countries, France and the Netherlands,

1) Wittenberg and Jena: all.

2) The Wittenbergers and the Jenaers: the best core^ Erlanger: the best core. >!

and among our neighbors, for no other reason than that they know Christ to be the only priest and savior. Otherwise, they will surely let the most wicked, evil-doers and murderers go, if only they do not adhere to this preaching, but help them to blaspheme and persecute.

264. But we are told, first of all, that we should not be surprised or angry if we see emperors, kings, princes, lords, wise, highly learned, excellent people condemning this doctrine, and not begin to doubt and think as the fickle spirits do: Well, perhaps it will not be right, otherwise the great, the mighty, the learned would certainly accept and believe it; if emperors, kings of France, great princes, lords and bishops had it preached, I would also believe it. Nay, not so, but think the contrary: it must surely be the right doctrine; for I hear and see that kings and lords, who otherwise can suffer and practice all idolatry and lies, will not suffer this to be preached of Christ and believed in, since otherwise they cannot blame us for harming or hurting them, but would gladly see them and all the world, along with us, helped, pray for them, teach everyone to be obedient to them. But this is the sin that is not to be suffered, and therefore we must die, that we preach that Christ is our Savior and the Savior of all the world, and that we are redeemed and saved by His blood alone, and that we want to remain on it, and take and administer His Sacrament as He commanded.

Now you see what the Scripture says about great kings and lords of the world: "By God, no one should wish to be called a king because of this text, because they are so shameful and are accused of murder, crucifying the Son of God and their own Savior, as much as there is in them. Should someone be frightened when he hears a king called. It is too much for great lords to have such things sung and said of them publicly, and to stand and be proclaimed in the Scriptures as the enemies of this man, who is called their priest and savior, and who bought and saved them with his blood, even from whom they are said to be kings.

and sit on their chairs. Let him now be proud and boast whoever wants to be called king or prince, and insist on his great power, honor and property, so he hears here that his hair may well stand on end, and he may be afraid of himself, and would rather not have been born a prince and lord, where he does not put down his feathers and humble himself before this Lord, and submit his crown, power and honor to him.

But lest anyone become fainthearted and think that such enemies will always come to this end, or fear that Christ's kingdom and priesthood must perish because of it, he adds and says what they deserve with such bluster and opposition, and what God wants to do about it. Truly, such great heads are terribly afraid that if they wanted to hear it and could believe it, they would be scared to death of it. In fact, he would like to provoke them to repentance and move them to convert and stop raging against this Lord. But if they will not, let them know what shall come upon them. Therefore he tells them beforehand that they will have no excuse afterwards, and that they will bring upon themselves the well-deserved punishment, that they will feel it, and that faith will come into their hands of that which they despised before.

267 But it is also said to the Christians for their comfort, that we know that they 1) should not carry out what they have in mind against this Lord and his company. For if they should continue to persecute in this way, we would not be able to stand, and in the end the Christians would become very few and fall behind. That is why we must have a savior who will ward off and prevent the persecution. Only the divine power, which is called in this verse, must and can do this: "the Lord at your right hand". I, I will be it myself (says God), and also do it myself, by my divine, almighty power; so great, so mighty shall they not be, I will meet them and pay them.

268 And that it be seen that it should not be a joke, but that he should be punished with the punishment.

1) The words: "the enemies of our Lord Christ" are added in the Wittenberg and the Jena.

He says, "He will smite the kings, or he will smite them. Then hear thou what the strength and power of his right hand is, and what earnestness he will use and exercise against such. They shall not be too strong nor too powerful for him, as it seems, when they are in the work, and rage against Christianity, as if they have already subdued and suppressed it, and now sit so firm and strong that no one can resist them or weaken their power. No (he says), he is not so weak and powerless. For he has such power that when he begins, he can attack them in such a way that it will not be called smitten or overthrown, but smashed, as one smashes a pot, Ps. 2:9, so that they will lie in ashes and dust at once with their lands and people, and will never be able to come up again.

269 Therefore he also says that he will do this in the day of his wrath. For he gives them time and time enough, so that they may convert and stop until his day and hour comes; he admonishes and warns them to beware of the day (which is called a day of wrath [Isa. 13:13]) and to anticipate the punishment with repentance. For since thou high priest (he will say) still reignest and preacheest on earth, it is the day of grace and mercy. Therefore, whoever wants to convert and be saved, let him do so because the sun of grace is shining; for he still has a day of wrath, which will pass over those who do not want to accept this day of grace. When that day of grace is over and missed, they will find what they have done and deserve; and as they now run and storm against Christ with fierce anger and raging, so then he will also run and bring his wrath upon them, so that they will perish under it.

270 For they also want to have it that way. They will not and cannot suffer mercy and kindness, to which they are kindly and fatherly enticed and admonished, but want to pass badly with their heads, and will not stop until he lets his anger go, and calls and heaps it upon himself to the utmost, so that it must suddenly burn up, as the 2nd Psalm, v. 12, says; not individual people, but kings and lords with lands and people.

consume them like stubble or dry leaves, and thus put the bottom out of the barrel, and even make up with them, so that one must say: Behold, here were great kings and princes, mighty countries and people, where are they now?

The first kings of Jerusalem (when Christ came) were the three: 1) Herod, item, the chief priests, together with the whole council and city, who all with one accord crucified God His Son, and confidently persecuted and executed His Christians. Well, he watched them long enough; but when the day of wrath came (more than forty years after Christ's ascension), not only was there no Herod, Caiphas or Annas to be found, but not one stone was left upon another [Luc. 19, 44.], and the city and country lay in ashes for fifteen hundred years. Rome was also a mighty city, and held other kings for nothing, was also angry and wicked, tortured and murdered Christ's dear saints with great multitude, like sheep for the slaughter, that even in one day seventy thousand Christians were put to death, and thought to control things by force. But what is it now? Christians have remained, and still remain; baptism, gospel and sacrament still stand and go; yes, the more one has persecuted it and wanted to dampen it, the further and more it has spread and gained the upper hand. Rome, however, has been razed three times, so that it lies two men deep under the earth, and has now become a rat's nest of the pope and his cardinals, the devil's secret chamber, and no longer worthy to be called a city, compared to the one it was. That is what it has wanted and deserved with its raging and raging against this king and high priest, Christ.

So it will happen, as I unfortunately fear, after this prophecy about Germany, that people will say: dear Germany lies destroyed and devastated, because of our ingratitude, and because of the bishops, priests, tyrants, raging and raging. For they also want to bring it down by force, so that God should play with them the game that he played with Rome and Jerusalem.

1) Only the Jena one has an interpunction sign after "three". The other editions offer: "the three Herods".

God grant that we and our children may then be dead and not see the calamity.

273. Therefore, as I have said, He hereby wants to strengthen and equip the Christians, so that they will not fret about this, nor be afraid of whether kings and princes will oppose this Lord, and not consider that they are kings and mighty lords, as if one must therefore be obedient to them, and let this Lord go, or despair of him, as if his kingdom must fall, but know that God wants us to be obedient to this Lord, and to crush with one another the disobedient, the rebellious, both kings and princes, and those with them who rage against Christ and help persecute his Christians.

274 Our tyrants and their hypocrites have now looked on, and pretend to the people that because they no longer want to believe and live according to the supposed spiritual authorities (as they themselves no longer obey or respect them, for as far as they desire to do so), they should believe and live according to the temporal authorities, and say that everyone must be obedient to his sovereign and lord. This is something that the drops did not know before, but now they have learned from our gospel and are persecuting us with it. And now they cannot force the people with spiritual command and ban, they turn against the gospel before princely authorities, and say: I command you these things, not as a bishop, but as your prince and authority, ordered by God, whom you are obliged to obey. This is just the right thing to do, that they want to become the people whom this verse shall strike, and be crushed by God. For they want to use royal and princely power against him. But if they can use royal and worldly power (given to them by God) and rage against God and His Christ, then He can also strike them and throw them down, as under the pots (as Psalm 2:9 says), so that they are shattered and the broken pieces lie there and can never be brought together again.

This is our consolation, which sustains us and makes the heart glad and courageous against the persecution and raging of the world, that we have such a Lord, who not only redeems us from sin, God's wrath and eternal death,

but also protects and saves us in suffering and persecution, so that we will not perish. And even though they rumble against the Christians in the most horrible way, neither the gospel nor Christianity shall perish, but their heads shall be crushed for it. For if their persecution should continue and endure without ceasing, Christianity could not remain. Therefore he gives them a time and says that he will watch them for a while, but not longer, until the hour comes, which is called "the day of wrath". If they do not want to stop in God's name, then they must stop in the devil's name.

276 But the prophet has his way of speaking here, that he does not say that Christ will do this, but "the Lord (he says) at your right hand" 2c., so that Christ may remain in a sweet and lovely image of grace and comfort, as the one who sits above for us; remembering neither vengeance nor punishment, but, as St. Peter says 1 Ep 2:23, he has given it home to him who judges rightly, and on the cross neither mourns nor curses his crucifiers [Luc 23:34], but pleads for them with weeping and great crying [Heb 5:7]. So he still does, and so remains, as the previous verse said, always and forever our dear, faithful priest. But to those who are his enemies and do not want to have him as their priest, the Father will not give them the benefit of the doubt, nor let them go unpunished; for he is at his right hand the high, eternal power and majesty, who will not finally suffer their defiance and raving against Christ. And because they only want to be enemies, they will also have an enemy in him, and such an enemy against whom they will not be able to do anything, but will lie crushed in ashes by him (when he hits them).

V. 6: He will judge the nations, he will do great battle, he will crush the head of great nations.

The previous verse was spoken primarily to the Jewish people and country, to whom Christ was promised, and both the kingdom and the priesthood were given to them by God, so that they might first accept Christ as their rightful king and priest.

But where they would not, it was prophesied to them beforehand that the kingdom and royal lineage would come to an end, the land would be laid waste, and the people scattered and destroyed; after which Christ would also come among the Gentiles. Now this verse prophesies of this, and reaches out and goes into all the world, telling both how he will spread his kingdom everywhere through the gospel, so that everyone who wants to hear and accept it will be saved, and again also that those who do not want to suffer it, like those, will be punished, no matter how powerful, great and mighty they may be.

278 He is to rule and reign through his word or ministry and the Holy Spirit, so that he punishes sin and brings it to righteousness, gives grace to poor sinners and helps them, and condemns others who do not want it. For these are the two parts of the judging or governing ministry, to take away and to control wrong and evil, and to help to right. So by his word he will bring all the Gentiles from sin to his obedience and to salvation, wherever there are Gentiles. But they that will not, and set themselves in defiance against his rule, that they should be kings, princes, and chiefs of the earth, he will punish them, that they also shall be brought down, as they that were his own people, and so shall lie down with a great multitude, as in a great battle, when it lieth full of dead bodies.

So this Lord is still today a judge among the 1) Gentiles, and so rules that we have his Word and Sacrament. For he teaches, baptizes, absolves, feeds, comforts, and preaches eternal life throughout the world. But because the heathen also rage against him, he must also control the same, and cast it among them, so that they must cease; and shall be such a great, dreadful punishment, that it shall be called beaten with a great heap, and the whole heathen nation made full of dead corpses; that is, all kings, lords, countrymen, and people, who will not cease to persecute the gospel, must finally and eternally be overthrown, and their heads laid in ashes, that they shall never again-" (John 1:9).

1) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers. In the original "and". The Erlanger has the Conjectur: "us".

who may arise. For since they set themselves against him with all their might and power, he must also strike and punish them with great force, so that he may defend and preserve his kingdom and Christianity, as it is written in Wis 6:7: potentes potentior tormenta patientur, "the mighty shall be mightily punished.

In particular, he says, he will crush the head of great countries, that is, the highest power in the world. He who will have the reign and the emperors, let him beware. He does not say who will be the head, because in David's time there was still nothing about Rome; but Daniel set four emperors in succession, until Christ [Dan. 7], at which time the Roman Empire was the head, as it still is in part, but not so great and powerful as before. For such empire is now divided, that one part towards the morning, and almost the greater, is held by the Turkish tyrant, the other towards the evening by the pope, and what is left of the Roman empire by the German emperors. All these, who will also be the head, who persecute the gospel (as the Turk, the pope with emperors and kings, who were attached to him, did so far and still do), shall be crushed, until they finally perish, and will be nothing anymore; as Daniel also prophesies in the other chapter, v. 34, about the stone, which crushes the great image, with iron, clay, silver and gold, that is, all kingdoms on earth.

281 He has also done so up to now, as above.

[The experience of these fifteen hundred years bears ample witness to how he has rumbled and raged among the great heads of the earth. How is the beautiful land of Asia, Egypt, and Greece so miserably devastated and desolate? What is the famous city of Athens (which was a star and pearl in Greece) but a desolate place, where about one or two fishermen live, and hardly so much of it remains that one can notice that there was a city there. What is the old Rome but a churchyard, yes, a loud Schindeleichen, where the great lords of the world lie buried, and their houses and magnificent, mighty buildings thrown on them.

When he has thus destroyed and reduced to ashes the excellent empire, since it was the highest and was called and praised with honor as the head of the world, he will not be very afraid of the remaining fires that are still burning, that is, of the poor Plätting lind Schürling, Pabst, Cardinals and his scales. Angry and wicked they may be, hanging kings and princes upon them, presuming to exterminate us: but how soon are they also crushed, that they all lie in ashes, like those before them! For what are they but beggars to them? yet are they down, and lie in the mire. And he that smote and destroyed them shall yet be able to smite an angry plague and a wicked tyrant, that he may lay down his head with all the enemies of the gospel; but it is not yet time, and the day of grace must yet shine and go for our sakes; after that it shall come to pass, and such things shall be done unto them, that it shall be said: Here a few years ago was a mighty prince, a mighty bishop; where are they now?

This is written for our comfort, that we may not be afraid of it, though the pope, the emperor, the Turk, the dodderer, and the devil himself be almost angry and furious; for we hear, and shall be assured, that the man reigneth and liveth, who hath hitherto crushed all his enemies, that these also shall not escape him.

V. 7. He will drink from the brook on the way, therefore he will lift up his head.

This is a strange verse, and the Jews have perverted it with strange, unrhymed interpretations and glosses. For they are exceedingly fond of the sayings of the glorious Messiah, and tickle themselves with them, when they hear that their Messiah is to be king over all the nations, and that God will punish and destroy those who will not obey him, so that they, the Jews, may come into power and become mighty in the great king's court. For they dream and imagine that he will sit down in Jerusalem, rebuild the city, and establish the kingdom there, and from there spread it through his Jews to all the earth.

285. But again, they do not like at all that the Scripture says back and forth like this, that he is

shall suffer and die; it is not acceptable to them that the Messiah, the Son of David and of God, of whom such a glorious thing is written, should allow himself to be tortured and killed by his enemies. This is the word of the cross, of which St. Paul says in 1 Cor. 1:18, which causes such great trouble among this people that the great multitude falls away and is lost, and only a handful of them come to the Christian faith. For they cannot rhyme the two together: that Christ should be the supreme King over all kings, and yet should suffer and be put to death. Reason stands there and is distraught, and yet it cannot even agree that such a mighty King, who will slay and destroy all kings, should himself be slain by them. What shall we do, they say, with such a king who begins his kingdom in such a way that he is the first to be shamefully tortured and killed as a thief and murderer?

286. But this verse clearly teaches us that this Messiah or Christ is not to have and lead a temporal kingdom in the flesh, in a worldly way, but another, spiritual kingdom, in which the King is to rule eternally, not with external power, army strength, sword and weapons, but by invisible, divine power. And so he himself shall come to earth, and dwell here in the way, as a wayfarer, sojourner and pilgrim among the people, like another man, that his life shall be called a journey or wandering, as in Scripture is called the common daily life of men on earth [Gen. 47:9], that in the sight of the world and the eyes of the flesh he should have no other appearance or reputation than another man (as St. Paul says in Phil. 2:5 ff.), and should not have the appearance or splendor of a worldly king, but should be a contradiction and nothing else than a poor, suffering, despised, even condemned man.

This is how it should go for him on the way, and this should be the way through which he enters his kingdom; as he himself also calls it John 16:16, "going to the Father"; namely, that he has departed from this world through death, and has gone from this life into that, sitting down at the right hand of the Father in his eternal kingdom.

Thus the prophet, after having said such great and glorious things about this king, interprets himself how he shall rule over all, and how he shall crush all kings, and all that is great which sets itself against him, lest anyone should understand this to be a Jewish delusion, as if it were to happen in a fleshly, worldly way. It is true that he will be great and mighty above all the kings of the earth; but I will tell you the right gloss, and show you how he will set himself, and what will be the manner and form in which he will come to such dominion: He will not be such a worldly lord and king as I and my descendants are in Jerusalem, and other kings, but he will come on earth, into this common life and being, and will walk and go the way here like a common man, neither looking at anything special in front of others, nor giving orders.

289. and in the same (says he) he shall "drink of the brook", that is, suffer and die; for that is called "drink" in the Scriptures; and "cup", have all kinds of torment, sorrow and suffering [Matth. 20, 22.], even as Christ in the garden, sweating blood, prayed and said, Matt. 26:39, "Dear Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; but if it cannot be otherwise, I will drink it, and thy will be done." Behold, this is the very drinking of which this verse speaks. So also the prophets speak of it, and call it drunk, when God punishes [Ps. 60, 5.], item, poured out or watered and made drunk they call, having great torture and suffering. And the "cup" or chalice is called every man's part and measure, to suffer allotted to him by God; as Ps. 75, 9. [Jer. 25, 15.] and in many more places.

290] So Christ also had to drink a cup here on earth and become drunk, that is, suffer torture and torment, and thus become a disgrace before all the world, and in addition so miserable and poor in his kingdom, that he did not have so much of his own, where he could lay down his head [Matth. 8:20], and there was no crown, nor royal ornament, nor splendor, but only a cross, nails and blood to be seen, and so he hung there most shamefully, being unable to move heaven or earth, nor to stand with his feet.

Therefore he is not called bad here (as elsewhere) from the cup, but "drunk from the brook," to show that he should not feel low or common sufferings and miseries, but bear the very highest, bitterest and most horrible suffering and torture, and die the most terrible death. For this little word *torrens* means a water or stream that runs and rushes swiftly and strongly, as if it were poured down by a heavy rain, and runs and tears along in a full stream, unstopped. Thus, Christ's suffering is not called a little drink or a cup full, but a whole stream or brook drunk. Just as Psalm 42:8 says of such suffering, "All your floods, waves of water and waves go over me." The river is now the whole world with its power; for the Scriptures also call rivers and waters great and many nations, Isa. 8:7 [Revelation 17:15], as there was Herod, the high priest, Pilate and the Romans' power; last of all the devil, with all his hell, sin, and the terror and fear of death, and what is more of misery; all this fell on him, that he had to drink it out and overcome it.

292 So he now decides and says: "Therefore (that is, when he has thus drunk and suffered) he will lift up his head", that is, become glorious and rule mightily over all. This is to be his manner and grasp, that he may come to glory. Other kings and lords, when they want to rise high, take hold of the land and the people by force and power, and are themselves the waters and rivers that pass over others. But this king shall thus begin to let all the power and authority of the world pass over him, and shall do nothing but be crucified and slain. This is the course he takes in the way.

But precisely because he suffers and lies there, overwhelmed with all the wrath of God, with our sin and the devil's power, he comes to lift up his head. This should be the means and the cause of his glory, that because he is thus cast down, under competition, the devil, death and hell, God must exalt him again, and badly set his head on high again, as St. Paul Phil. 2, 8-10. says, Christ humbled himself, and was lifted up.

became obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross. "Therefore God has exalted Him, and given Him a name above all names, in which all the knees of those in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, must bow."

He has accomplished this with his drink of suffering, that he is the highest above all, and sits at the right hand of God, of which the first verse of this psalm says. This is the height in which he soars and rises above all kings and all that is high in heaven and earth, so that everything must come under this Lord unless it wants to be struck down and crushed. But those who are under him and obedient to him, he will also bring to such glory, which he has acquired, over sin, death, the devil and all power. For what he suffered and did here, he did not suffer and do for his own sake, but for their benefit. For it pleased God that he should drink for us, and through his obedience drink out and purge our sin, God's wrath and hell, and thus be our dear priest and king, who through his priesthood conferred on us what he had done, and through his kingdom protected and preserved us against all things.

But as we have heard that Christ had to enter his glory through suffering and death for his person [Luc. 24, 26.], so we should also know that in his kingdom on earth, that is, in Christianity, it must still be so; for it is prefigured in his person, and all who are Christians must become like his image. Therefore, from the beginning of the world His kingdom has always been under the cross and suffering, and we also have to go the way afterward through misery, persecution, shame and death, to glory and life [Acts 14:22, 2 Timothy 3:12]. For since he, our Lord and Head, had to do these things, why should we want it any better? Summa, whoever wants to be under this Lord must be accustomed to drink and suffer with Him on the way, so that he may also (as St. Paul says) be exalted with Him to glory, Rom. 8, 17. 2 Tim. 2, 11.

296 Behold, thus is this verse clear, of the passion and resurrection of Christ, how he should die, and yet not abide in death, but through the same into life and his

eternal kingdom. And so the whole psalm is nothing else but a prophecy of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and everything must be understood spiritually, that is, not according to what the eyes see and reason comprehends, but faith grasps; That is, that he is a man, the Son of David, and yet the eternal God, seated at the right hand of the Father; so also that he should reign among his enemies, and that his people should willingly sacrifice to him in beautiful adornment, and that his children should be born to him like the dew from the dawn. These are all spiritual things, which no one can see with the eyes of the flesh. So also that he is an eternal priest, and makes us all priests, seeing that there is neither church, nor altar, nor priestly ordination. Item, that he destroy all kings and heads of the earth, which set themselves against him. And summa, that he may reign, that both he and his Christians may come through the cross and death to glory and life. All this cannot be seen in the flesh, and no one understands it, except he who believes such a word.

297 Thus we have this beautiful psalm as a special core and example of the whole of Scripture, the like of which prophesies so abundantly and completely and paints for us the Lord Christ with His whole kingdom, and is full of all comfort for Christians. For he is 1) a lovely, comforting king and priest for the poor, miserable, suffering and afflicted Christians on earth. But he shall be terrible to them that will not receive him, nor believe; but also to us for good and comfort, that we fear not his enemies. Therefore let him be our dear king and priest, who represents us eternally before God. His enemies, by whatever name they may be called, be they as clever, wise and powerful as they can, he will find in his own time, crush and exterminate them, and cast them into the abyss of hell and condemn them eternally. But God help us to stay with this Lord, and to be found grateful to Him, and to sing this Psalm to Him with right faith and joy. To our dear Lord and Savior alone be praise, honor and glory, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever, amen.

1) "is" is missing in the Erlanger.

26. interpretation of the 111th Psalm.*)

Anno 1530.

The hundred and eleventh Psalm interpreted. 1530.

Preface.

To the strict and firm Caspar von Kokeritz 1) zum Sees, my favorable dear lord and friend.

Grace and peace in Christ, our Lord and Savior! Faithful, steadfast, dear Lord and friend! After I have hitherto dealt with all kinds of Christian doctrine through several booklets, Praise to God, and have now recently sent out admonitions to the school, 2) to listening, 3) and especially to the reverend Sacrament, 4) and, as I hope, have faithfully carried out what is mine according to my office, I am moved, probably from time to time, to also issue an admonition that one should thank and praise God for such Sacrament and other benefits;

because I, unfortunately, experience daily not only the unspeakable ingratitude in all the world, but also the horrible, terrible contempt, both of the Sacrament, Gospel and all the graces of God, shown to us so abundantly at this last time. And also had the will to make a special new song about it. But because the Holy Spirit, the highest and best poet, has already made better and finer songs (namely the dear Psalms) to thank and praise God with, I have left my nasty and vulgar poetry, and have taken this Psalm, the Holy Spirit's song and poem, before me, and interpreted the same; as in it he himself shows us how and with what manner and words we should thank and praise God for his grace, and especially for the holy Sacrament. For I can well think that not everyone can sufficiently understand such a master song, nor remember how it is to be used; because to us Germans the Hebrew manner and language (even though it has been interpreted into German) is nevertheless not clear and distinct in all places nor in all words, but may at least be used to show, as with a finger, what is meant and sung within, and like singing to children a song that they are to learn.

1) The spelling of this name is very different. Here in the original: Kokeritz, in the Wittenberg and in the Jena edition: Kökeritz; in Luther's house account (De Wette VI, 329): Kockeritz; in a letter of Luther (De W. V, 640) and in the Table Talks (Cap. 48, Z4): Köckeritz. In Latin (De W. V, 159): a Lolcrits and (in bsutsi-bnob" p. 158) äs Oobritn.

2) Sermon that children should be kept in school. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. X, 416.

3) This "exhortation to obedience" probably refers to the "exhortation to the clergy, assembled at the Diet of Augsburg. Walch, old edition, vol. XVI, 1120.

4) Admonition to the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. X, 2170.

*Luther must have made this interpretation soon after his return from Coburg to Wittenberg, because on October 11 he arrived in Wittenberg at 7 o'clock in the evening (Kolde, Analecta, p. 155), and the letter of this Pfalm has the date: "Montag nach Catharina", that is, November 28, 1530. The first edition appeared under the title: "Der Hundert vnd eilffte Psalm ausgelegt durch D. Martin Luther, Wittenberg. Martin Luther, Wittenberg. M.D.LXX." At the end: "Gedruckt zu Wittenberg durch Hans Weis, Am Jar M.D.XXX." A second edition appeared under the same title in the same year. Furthermore, in 1530 a reprint without indication of place and printer, and in 1531 a reprint by König and Hergotin in Nuremberg. In the collective editions: in the WittMhW vol. III, p. 528 b; in the Jenaer (1566), vol.V, p. 202; in theAltenburger, vol. V, p. 334; in theLeM^ p. 472 and in the Erlanger, vol. 40, p. 192. The attribution is also found in De Wette, vol. IV, p. 1M I go the text mainly after the Erlanger edition, which has printed the original text, but under WgUchung of the Wittenberger and the Jenaer. The variants are insignificant.

For God knows how great a sorrow this is to me, and certainly one of my greatest burdens, that I have experienced such ingratitude among us Germans, and still have to see it every day. Thus, I am afraid that a plague will soon befall Germany, the like of which we have perhaps not yet experienced, and which we are not yet prepared for, unless there is no God or Christ, and His Gospel is a lie. For our portion, being hardened and blinded, will not and cannot cease from blaspheming and persecuting our dear Lord and Savior. So our part is so ungrateful, the other part, that they would rather have no gospel than to hear it; I am silent, that they should nourish or promote it, regardless of the fact that they both know that it is the truth and the word of God.

(3) For I consider that it has come before you, as now, at the Diet of Augsburg, our counterpart has himself confessed that our delivered Scripture and doctrine is not contrary to the articles of faith or the holy Scriptures, and has almost astonished many that such a pure doctrine is, as they have been so deafened hitherto by their poisonous ear-blowers, that they thought no more harmful doctrine had ever come on earth, and would never be so joyful as to be allowed to present itself and be looked upon before the emperor and the empire. Yes, they have also confessed that their thing, namely popery, is not founded in the Holy Scriptures; so that even a great lord said of their own doctors: Truly our doctors defend us finely! They confess on both sides that our thing is not founded in the Scriptures. They still rage about their own conscience and testimony, and want to destroy our doctrine and preserve the abomination of the pope.

Again, on our side the nobility is so insolent and proud, as if they did not know whether they wanted to walk on the head; and the peasant so wanton and puffed up, as if he were lord over all lords; and both nobility and peasant together, not only despise God, but also rob and steal from the Gospel, which they are not given to, but owe to give, that I worry we are tempting God too high, and will not leave Him alone with charms,

To anger and to provoke, until he has to let a weather pass over us.

(5) He has already attacked that part and warned it sufficiently with the great flood of water that has passed over Rome and indicated what he intends to do about it. So one writes now from the Netherlands such terrible God's warnings and signs also of water floods.

(6) And how can and should he do otherwise, the dear God? There is neither hearing nor seeing, no teaching, no praying, no exhorting, no pleading, no humility, no patience, no forbearance, no miracles, no signs; we force God to anger with all our might, and will not let Him be merciful, however much He would like to; that I truly cannot blame the dear Father that he once gives us an honest distemper; it will not be otherwise, our sin and ingratitude is too ripe and even superior, just as the Jews were, since they did not accept Christ and the apostles with love and thanksgiving.

(7) But I, together with all Christ's dear friends, would gladly do so, and help to avert such anger, or at least to postpone and forgive it, as much as it would always be possible. Therefore, I have endeavored and endeavored with teachings and exhortations to gratitude, and now I have also indicated this psalm to the Christians, so that they not only gain the desire and devotion to give thanks, but also have actual, certain, good words and ways, so that they may praise God and give thanks, so that no lack is found in me or in us, nor is any lack felt, and they may not complain that they know neither word nor way to do so. I know with a good conscience I know with a good conscience to boast that I have done what is mine, so let it be as God wills, who, as St. Peter [2 Ep. 2, 9] says, knows how to save the righteous at the very time when he destroys the wicked, as he saved Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah. It is not (if God wills) my and my faith's fault where evil will come.

008 Now this psalm have I committed unto you, and have sent it forth in your name; not that I should abuse you, or seek your glory; but that I might gladly

I have reasons and accept, where I can, to admonish also the others of the nobility, if they would let themselves be moved to follow your example and that of your equals (because they are of equal standing with you, and therefore the example may be all the stronger). For God has graciously gifted you with an earnest love and desire for His Word, and I have often heard from you both in writing and orally your sighing and complaining about such great ingratitude towards God and His grace; which is indeed an indication of no false heart towards the dear Gospel. God keep you in this for eternity, amen. (9) Even if I did it to praise your name, I would not have sinned because of it. For what I would do, I would do to the honor of God and to the praise of His grace, even to the disgrace of the unrighteous nobility, so that the pious nobility would have all the more favor with God and His Christians.

and the unkindness would have to be all the more uncreated and hostile. Why should I not put the pious Wolf of Lindau, who has now departed from us to the Father in Heaven in such a Christian way on the Imperial Day, in my mortal book, because he is already written by God Himself in the book of life? So I also know well that you and your kind do not consider the fame that your name is praised in my book to be anything. Your glory is better that your name also be written in the book of life, as Paul writes of his comrades. What I do, I do for the benefit of others, as an admonition and an example. We have no right to glory or honor among men; Christ is our glory and honor, to whom be praise and thanksgiving, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever, amen. Give my regards to your dear Rachel, and may God also give her a dear Joseph one day, amen. At Wittenberg, Monday after Catharine [Nov. 28] 1530. Martinus Luther.

The hundred and eleventh Psalm.

We know well how God instituted the feast of Easter for the people of Israel, in which they were to annually praise His wonders and give thanks for the redemption that He had brought them out of Egypt, as Exodus 12 says. Therefore, this psalm looks to me as if it was made for such a paschal feast, that David wanted to set up a way for the crowd, and give them the words in their mouths, how they should give such praise and thanks, and thus let this psalm go out, which the Jews could have sung, where they came together at each other, or over the paschal lamb.

2) Although such a paschal feast and paschal lamb was taken away by our Lord Jesus Christ, and he himself became our paschal lamb in its place, and instituted a much higher paschal feast, 1) so much higher and greater is the redemption, since by his going from this world to the Father, 2) that is, by his going to the Father, he has become our paschal lamb.

The Lord's Passion, Death and Resurrection (which is the right Passover or Easter) has defeated our enemy, the devil, death and sin, and has brought us out of the right Egypt into the right Promised Land, namely to eternal life. Although (I say) such an old paschal feast is now long gone, the psalms and scriptures that speak and sing of it are not completely dead or in vain, but we can draw on them and use them for our feast, as we do everywhere else in the scriptures. And St. Paul Gal. 4, 22. ff. also refers to Sarah and Isaac and Jerusalem 2c. and points to us Christians and to Christianity, saying that we are the right Isaac, Christianity the right Sarah and the right Jerusalem; for all things were taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles, as Christ says Matth. 21, 43: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to the Gentiles" who bear its fruit.

3 Accordingly, we may well draw, interpret, and sing this Psalm from the holy

1) Erlanger: set.

2) Erlanger: from the.

Sacrament; and does no harm at all, but rhymes well, that it would be sung under the Mass for *Introitu* or otherwise; is also short, and has beautiful words. For our Easter is, as often as we say Mass, 1) preach and perform the Sacrament; and now it is Easter every day with us Christians, without that once a year, for the old remembrance, special Easter is kept; which is not unjust, but fine and praiseworthy, that one also keeps the time at which Christ died and rose again, although one does not keep the remembrance of his suffering and resurrection bound to such time, but may do every day as he says: "As often as ye do these things, do them in remembrance of me" [1 Cor. 11, 24. ff].

(4) Therefore I have taken this psalm before me to interpret, for the sake of those who do not know better, that we may also sing such a song with understanding in our masses or at the sacrament. And so that it may be the easier to understand, I will first explain the understanding that the people of Israel had about their paschal lamb; for our understanding will be the better for it. So David taught his people with this psalm to praise God and give thanks for his good deeds and words, especially in the exodus from Egypt:

V. 1. I thank the Lord with all my heart.

(5) But before that he puts this word, "Hallelujah," which means, Praise the Lord, and is just as much as if one were to begin to praise God, to exhort and provoke one another. As if we Germans in the church, or one among us, began to say, "Let us praise God"; just as the preachers in the pulpit exhort us to sing, "Now we pray to the Holy Spirit"; or, "Christ is risen"; and the like. So here David also addresses his people: HalleluYes, that is, praise the Lord; or, let us praise the Lord; or, we 2) will praise the Lord; namely, thus: "I give thanks unto the

Lord with all our heart" 2c. What then is thanksgiving, and wholeheartedness, let us save on our understanding.

In the council of the sincere and in the community.

(6) There he shows where and in what place this psalm is to be sung; not in the streets, roads or markets, but where the pious come together in particular; (3) as the children of Israel came together at the paschal feast in the houses, as much as was necessary for the paschal lamb; so that it may be a civil, fine, honest assembly, in special places, and yet not a secret corner nor an assassin's grotto. For the word *sod* [XXX], which I have rendered "council", means a secret conversation and council, which some hold in other places, such as the councilors in the council house, the canons in the chapter, the princes in the council chamber. There is neither a corner nor an assassin's grotto; for it is well known publicly where they are with one another, and the place is not secret; and yet the trade is so far secret that not everyone must be present, but only those who belong to it. Therefore he adds, "and in the congregation," that is, in the crowd, where some are publicly with one another; and yet it is a council, because no one is there except those who belong to it.

(7) So the children of Israel were gathered together at the passover from time to time in public, and often in houses with one another. But because they acted the paschal lamb, since no Gentile had to be present, such their assembly was a council, and like a secret conversation or action, and calls it a "council of the sincere," that is, of the pious and holy. The "sincere", or *recti*, are actually called those who do not pretend, but do what is right, not respecting any person, favor, money, honor, or anything else. 4) Not that they are all sincere. Not that they are all sincere and pious who are among them, for there was Korah and many bad boys among them [Num. 16, 1. ff.], but that there were some pious and holy ones among them; just as any parish church or parish is holy, even though there are many false, wicked parishioners in it. Also mostly because that such office or ordinance is not holy.

1) Erlanger: have.

2) In the Erlanger, "we" is doubled.

3) Erlanger: came.

4) *ichtiges* - anything.

It is also called the counsel of the pious, which God has given to the pious to keep, and it was established for the sake of the pious and not for the sake of the wicked.

(8) Thus the meaning of this verse is, that every man the child of Israel should tell where they eat the passover: I thank the Lord here in this public assembly, since we are especially with one another as in secret council, and no Gentile nor stranger need be present.

V. 2. Great are the works of the LORD, sought out for all their pleasure.

(9) This is the first praise in which they praise God in general, above all His wondrous works and creatures, none singled out by name; as is the way of the prophets when they want to praise a special work, that they begin high and in front, and praise God in many other works as well; as we Christians also do. But he says, "These are great and glorious works. But this no one sees except the pious who are to sing this psalm. Therefore he says that such great works of God are sought after according to all the desire of those who are pious, that is, one must meditate on the works of God and look at them carefully, and then one will find how wonderful and great they are, so that a heart will see in them all wonder, delight and joy. How this happens, we want to save until our interpretation.

V. 3. His deeds are praise and adornment, and his righteousness endures forever.

10. This is the other piece of praise; there he approaches the paschal feast or paschal lamb, but nevertheless for the other time he grasps in general all God's works, not of creation or miraculous works, but all his orders and foundations, which he has set up by his word and command, as there are father and mother status, priest status, Levite status according to the law of Moses, servant and maidservant status, marital status, master and subject status, Sabbath and feasts, worship and church law and the like; which are all his works or his business, for he hath commanded and appointed them.

11. also says that such are God's business and pen "praise and adornment", that is,

Beautiful and fine, praiseworthy and beautiful, so that those who know them are to be praised as being of a fine class. But the wicked know them not, and despise them. And such ranks, where they are right, are right in the world, and the righteousness of God is there; but where such ranks are not kept, that is unrighteousness. Now God holds over such estates that they must remain (otherwise the world could not stand), 1) although many do and rage against it. Therefore he says that his righteousness will remain forever. All sects and righteousness, invented by men, perish at last; but these estates remain, and maintain justice in the world. More about this later.

V. 4. He has made a memorial of his wonders, the gracious and merciful Lord.

Here he comes to the third piece of praise, namely the paschal feast, which he especially means in this psalm, and also remains on it until the end. But he uses heartfelt, devotional words: "The gracious and merciful Lord," 2) which are nothing but fiery words of a grateful heart. As if he said: "Oh, how gracious and merciful God you are, who out of such causeless mercy, without any merit on our part, have instituted this Easter for us, in remembrance of the miracles you performed for us in Egypt, so that we may not forget you or depart from you. O, how faithfully you have meant this for us 2c.

V. 5 He gives food to those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.

(13) Here he begins to give thanks and praise to God, especially for the blessing he does at the Easter feast and with the paschal lamb, and tells the fruit, why God instituted the Easter feast. First, he says that he gives us a food, namely the paschal lamb, wafers 2c., which is not a common food, like all other food, but holy, and given only to the God-fearing, who know that they please God with it, and eat it in his grace, as he sanctifies, blesses and consecrates it with his word and command. That it is called food for

1) These brackets are set by us.

2) Erlanger: "God.

the godly, for in such food one seeks more of God's honor and obedience, neither the belly's pleasure and fullness; otherwise one could prepare better and more food. But this is to be food for the godly, in which they are sure to honor and obey God.

14 The other blessing is that he remembers his covenant forever, that is, he makes and commands that on Easter they remember his ten commandments and promise that he will be their God and send the Messiah. And such remembrance continues forever, year after year, so that one does not forget his blindness, or get other gods; so that on this Easter feast one not only eats, but also preaches, and learns to know and trust in God.

V. 6. He proclaims to his people the power of his works, that he has given them the inheritance of the Gentiles.

(15) The third blessing is that on the feast of Easter God preaches to his people how with great power and strength he overthrew Pharaoh the king and drove out the nations from the land of Canaan and set his people in it, so that they may learn from it, as from mighty examples, to believe and trust him more in all things.

V. 7. The works of his hands are truth and right; all his commandments are righteous.

(16) The fourth blessing, to proclaim and praise God for the daily work that God does among the people, namely, to punish the wicked; as when He caused Korah to devour the earth [Num. 16:31], to burn some with fire [v. 35], to stab some with serpents [Cap. 21:6]. Item, that he plagued the whole nation with war, pestilence, famine, and other adversities, under which the good had to suffer with the wicked. For where God does not do this, 'there remains neither fear nor discipline among the people, and the mob becomes so wanton that no one can keep either peace or justice, both in the temporal and spiritual realms. The worldly authorities are too weak for him; so they do not pay attention to the sermon. Therefore, God must keep the rod in his hand over all this, and confidently cast it, so that they may

must keep peace with fear. And such work, that is, keeping the mob in fear and peace, is probably as great as striking and driving out the enemies.

Therefore, he calls such works "truth and justice. For although they are hard and sharp to look at, they are still right and good, and God does right and good with them. For they preserve the right and ensure that the truth remains, that is, a righteous being in the people, otherwise there would be vain, false, wicked boys, and the lowest would go to the top.

(18) The fifth benefit, that they also proclaim and praise God for having such fine, righteous teachings from God, namely, the Law of Moses, that is, the constant commandments of God, that is, everything that God has commanded them; these are righteous teachings, 1) and there is nothing false or deceitful in them, they are fundamentally right and good. This he says against all the gods and doctrines of the heathen, even against all the doctrines of men; for they shine, and yet are hollow and false.

V. 8. Forever and ever shall they be preserved, and done in truth and right.

(19) The sixth benefit is the greatest of all, namely, that God forcibly preserves the Scriptures and His Word among the people. For what good is it that even such fine, thorough teachings are there, where they are not preserved and remain for and for? For the devil opposes them without ceasing, with the power of kings and rulers, with the cleverness of the wicked, and with the false lives of the saints. God still preserves His word, so that it remains forever.

The seventh blessing, that God receives such teaching not only in the book or in the pulpit, but also in the work and life, so that many of the people may become devout through it, and live and do according to it, not hypocritically or falsely, but in truth, with a righteous heart, and outwardly with honest, sincere confession and conduct. This is what he means here: "done in truth and right", for which one gives thanks to God in the church.

1) In the original here and several times in the following "teaching" instead of: Teaching.

V. 9: He sends salvation to his people, he gives his covenant forever, his name is holy and honorable.

(21) The eighth good deed, that in time of strife or war he does not forsake his people, but helps them to conquer against their enemies, and though they are sometimes beaten and taken captive, yet again he delivers them; as all this may be written out at length in the histories.

(22) The ninth blessing, that he should keep his covenant for ever, is that he hath determined that his covenant with the people shall continue, and shall not cease nor be broken, because of the wicked, disobedient, false people, nor because of any man's ingratitude, who keepeth not the covenant. But he will keep it, and for his sake spare you. And this benevolence is the reason, cause and source of all the above-mentioned benevolences, because for the sake of his covenant he does everything, since he said he would be their God.

(23) The tenth blessing, that his people are highly honored because of this divine rule and nature, and have a glorious name among the nations, as they were promised by Moses [Deut. 26:19], that they would become higher than all the nations, and that God would make them famous and renowned in the whole world; as has happened, that they also have the honor and glory above all the previous blessings and goods. But he calls it God's name, just as above [v. 2 ff.⁴] he also ascribes all works and what is good among the people to God. For they have it from God, and it is all God's; therefore they also have the name from Him, and it is His name.

I call the word terrible from my German "hehr", which in Latin is called metuendum, reverendum. As when one considers an image, church, festival, sanctuary or the like beautiful and noble, and immediately opposes it with worry and seriousness. Thus the name of the Lord is not only holy in itself, but is also held high by men, even though many blaspheme and despise it.

V. 10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; it is a fine prudence of all who do it; its praise endures forever.

(25) It is not well said, "the fear of the Lord," for the Lord does not fear anyone. But how shall we do? We must give way to the Hebrew language and allow it. But it is the opinion: After he has thanked and told all the good deeds, he finally adds a wish and a mean admonition. As if he should speak: Because the name of the Lord is so holy and honorable, oh that all the world would do him such honor, and think well of him, of his works and of his words. For if one is to become wise, it must be through the word of God; but he who wants to become wise through the word of God must not despise it, as the world does, but must certainly believe that it is the word of God, and therefore, that it is the word of God, he must hold it high and honourable, as God Himself; then it comes in, and makes wise, prudent people.

(26) But lest there be a false, hypocritical, idle wisdom or fear of God, he adds, that it must not be proved by deed, saying, All this is fine prudence, and wise men are made of it; but then such prudence and wisdom is fine, if a man do and live by it, and not alone talk of it with his mouth. For such seek and have temporal honor and transient glory from it; but those who prove it by deed have eternal honor and imperishable glory from it.

27 Let this be said of the first understanding of this psalm, as David and the people of Israel used it at their paschal feast; and I well believe that the present Jews themselves could not have nor give such an understanding, as they no longer rightly understand anything in Scripture, but Moses' covering 1) is on their hearts, says St. Paul 2 Cor. 3:15. Nevertheless, it is fine to have the psalm also according to its old and first understanding, as the dear fathers and prophets used the same.

Now let us begin again from the beginning, and go to our Easter feast, that is, to the Lord's Supper or Mass. And I wanted, as I also said above [§ 3], that he should be in the _____

1) Erlanger: "Furdecke."

This can never be done better than at Mass, since we must celebrate the memory of Christ and give thanks to God, and we cannot do it with better words and ways, indeed, nowhere so with good ones as this Psalm does.

29 We must also include this psalm in our mass if it is not to stand alone and in vain in the Psalter. The Jews, even if they understand it, may not sing it, since they are deprived of almost all the benefits of God that are praised in it; they have neither temporal nor spiritual rule. So the Turks and the Tatars cannot sing it either, but only the Christians, who not only have such benefits of God, but also recognize that they are God's benefits and not human fortune.

(30) So now this psalm of thanksgiving goes freely throughout the world, where Christians are at mass together. It is no longer in the narrow land of Canaan, but in a small corner of the world; it has now become larger and resounds more widely; indeed, it has now become quite a confitebor, or psalm of thanksgiving, and goes forth in full swing and power. And sing: Hallelujah, let us praise the Lord. This is a word of the Holy Spirit, and His trumpet, to awaken and exhort Christians to give thanks to God with this psalm, as follows.

Aleph 1.

[I thank the Lord with all my heart.

(31) So I will divide the Psalm into 22 verses, as it is divided in Hebrew, since it is arranged according to the number of the Abc, and such a short verse is made for each letter. This is the true virtue and highest service of true Christians, that they give thanks to God and do this with all their heart; which virtue no other man on earth is able to do. The world is full of hypocrites, who say with their mouths, I thank the Lord; but it is not from the heart, "can also (as St. Paul says 1 Cor. 12, 3.)

No one can call Jesus a Lord except in the Holy Spirit. But he who is to give thanks to God must recognize and confess from the heart that it is only God's graces and gifts for which he gives thanks. Now, no one can recognize God's gifts by his reason, but the Holy Spirit must show our hearts, as St. Paul teaches in 1 Cor. 2:12: "We have received the Spirit of God, that we may know what has been given us by God."

Who does not know, they say, that all we have are gifts of God? And it is true, they know it all, and more than all; therefore St. Paul is also a great fool, that he may say that the Holy Spirit belongs to it, if one is to know such things. And yet they are such excellent people, who not only know it without the Holy Spirit, but have also long since torn it in their shoes before the Holy Spirit was born, and prove it finely by the fact that they know it. When God's gifts, such as wealth, power, honor, and a mansion, are present, they are so proud and hard that they defy the whole world; but when they are not present, they are such despondent rascals that the whole world becomes too narrow for them. Now, if they thought it was God's gift and not entirely their own, they could not insist and defy it so much, for they would have to think that it was not their own and that God could well take it away from them. Again, if they considered it to be God's gifts, they would not be so despondent and doubtful in times of need, for they would think that God could well give it to them.

(33) But now they do as thieves and robbers do, and though they have not stolen nor robbed, but have received it from God, yet they use it and act as if they had stolen and robbed it, and had not received it from God; they do not give thanks, nor do they serve God with it, but they serve themselves and their god, the devil, against God. Just as a thief and robber does not give thanks, nor does he serve with the stolen good the one whose good he has stolen or robbed. Therefore they are neither thieves nor robbers, but act as thieves and robbers. For even if a servant defies a great deal, and stands up with his mouth that he has his master's goods and gives thanks for them, he nevertheless serves with them.

The thanks of the servant will be a bad thanks; and the fact that he boasts a lot, knowing that they are his master's goods, will condemn him all the more, because he gives thanks with a lying mouth, and blasphemes with the deed, desecrates and mocks.

(34) Therefore it is said here, give thanks with all your heart, that it may be a heartfelt, thorough, right thanksgiving, and not say with your mouth, *Deo gratias*, and with your heart, *Non est Deus*; it is art, and the art of the Holy Spirit, to give thanks from the heart, or to say *Deo gratias*. And whoever can say it from the heart, you must not care for him to be proud, stubborn, wild and fierce, or to do against God with his goods; but if he does, know that he is lying as wide as his mouth is, as deep as his throat is, when he gives thanks to God, or says *Deo gratias*. It is a twofold ingratitude, in addition a lie, blasphemy or mockery. As if a feudal lord were to say to his feudal lord, "I thank you, and know that you have lent and given me the property, but would do the worst with such property against the feudal lord if he could; would that not be a fine thanksgiving and confession? With the mouth he confesses it for the lord's gift; with the deed he continues as if he were his lord's overlord and had everything from him himself, just as a thief or robber would also give thanks to whom he had stolen or robbed; that would be nothing other than mocking to the detriment.

Beth 2.

In the council of the sincere and in the community.

35 It is said above [§§ 6. 7] that such a council and congregation is a public, honest assembly in a special place, where not everyone has to be, as in the street or marketplace; also something special is done there, where also not everyone should be, as with us the churches are, and especially the choir, which from time immemorial has been specially built and set apart for this purpose, so that the sacrament is performed there and Christ's memory is kept; as also still happens in public masses. And is an assembly of the sincere or pious. For there must be living saints,

where the Sacrament and God's praise is done from the heart, because it cannot be done without the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says [1 Cor. 12:3]. And just as he wants to give thanks with all his heart, so should the assembly be of the sincere or pious, 1) that is, those who mean well and do not pretend and deceive with a false heart.

Now mark this verse well, and write it with large letters, that this psalm's praise, or the remembrance of Christ (of which he sings), should be done publicly in the multitude and in the Christian assembly, so that the corner masses and their own special sacrificial masses may be condemned; as Christ himself also says, not to one alone, but to the multitude, "Do these things in remembrance of me. And St. Paul calls it a gathering for the Lord's Supper, and also says that one should proclaim the death of the Lord [1 Cor. 11:18 ff.] But to whom does a corner priest preach? He does not preach to him, but has to do with the sacrifice, that he may make atonement for his son through his holy, devout prayer. But it is said here: "I give thanks to the Lord in the counsel of the upright, and in the assembly." This is how it should be called and remain.

Gimel 3.

[Great are the works of the Lord.]

(37) This is also the first praise of Christians, that they praise and give thanks to God for all His works that He has created, and praise Him as the only Creator and Master of all that is in heaven and earth, not only because He created it, but also because He created it all for our service and benefit. The sun and the moon must give us light day and night, the sky must give us rain, clouds, shadows and dew, the earth must give us all kinds of plants and animals, the waters must give us fish and innumerable necessities, the air must give us birds and breath, the fire must warm us and also give us innumerable uses. And who can tell it all? There is no other way to speak better, than with these short words: "Great are the "works of the

1) "or pious" is missing in the Erlanger.

The Lord", and cannot be sufficiently spoken of until eternity, even if the leaves and grass were like tongues. For who alone can praise the work, even consider that he created us body and soul from nothing, and keeps us alive daily, and protects us against so many devils and so many dangers of life?

Daleth 4.

Requests to all their pleasure.

038 Then he sheweth how few there are of the pious that regard or look upon such works of the LORD, wherefore they neither praise nor give thanks, neither can they say, Great are the works of the LORD; but are accustomed to them, and, like an old house of smoke, are in need of them, and do roar therein, as a sow in a hog's sack. O, they say, is this so great a thing that the sun shines? Fire warms? Water gives fish? Earth gives grain? Cow bears calves? Woman bears children? Chicken lays eggs? it happens every day.

(39) You, dear rude fool, therefore it must be small that it happens daily? But if the sun did not shine for ten days, it should become a great work. If there were no fire on earth, but in one place, I mean, it should also become more delicious, neither all gold and silver. If there were only one well in all the world, I think that a drop of water would be worth more than a hundred thousand guilders, while wine and beer would be a waste. Otherwise, if God made all women and children of legs, like Hevam [Gen. 2:22], and if there were only one that bore children, I think that all the world, all kings and lords would worship it for God. But now every woman is fruitful, she is nothing. If a juggler could make an eye that would live or see a cubit wide, help God, where would he become a lord on earth! Yes, whoever could make a leaf or a blossom on the tree would have to be above God, and have all the world full of wonder, praise and thanksgiving.

40. but is it not a grievous thing about the accursed ingratitude and blindness of men, whom God has filled with so rich, great

The people who are surprised at the miraculous deeds they do, and do not look at them or thank them for them, much less marvel at them or rejoice in them, but where, for example, a juggler comes who walks a tightrope or sells monkeys, they can marvel, praise and glorify him.

41 Therefore he says here that the works of God are great, but only in the eyes of the sincere, in the eyes of the sincere they are "sought after for all pleasure. For they think about the works, look at them, marvel at them with all joy, so that they have to give thanks from the heart, and say: "Well, this and this is an excellent, great, beautiful, glorious work. For they think, as often as they look at a work of God, how it would stand if it were not there. Death makes life noble, darkness praises the sun, hunger kisses the dear bread, sickness teaches what health is, and so on: the not makes that they must praise the being.

42 And this is also called "to inquire of the works of the Lord," to inquire, to consider, to consider them well, and how it should look if it were not created. There you can see all the wonder and delight in it. But only the sincere do this, as the 92nd Psalm, v. 5, says: "Lord, you give me joy in your works." The despisers, however, sing this verse thus: "Bad and low is what God does, and despised to the point of weariness and displeasure.

He [X]. 5.

[His deeds are praise and adornment.

(43) This is the other praise and thanksgiving, as stated above [§10], for all the works that God ordains among men, as there are all kinds of ranks and offices, or commands.

(44) Here one's heart shall laugh for joy when he finds himself in a state that God has established or arranged, and he shall give thanks with leaping and jumping for such a divine work, because he hears and is certain that his state before God is called praise and adornment. "Praise" means that which is praiseworthy and beautiful; "ornament" that which is adorned with jewels. And this is how the Hebrew language calls the beautiful clothes, as in Ex 28:2. God gave Moses to give Aaron clothes for praise and adornment.

That is what Germans call pretty, beautiful clothes, like those made of good cloth, colors, colorful, and with jewelry. There you have it, that a servant, maid, son, daughter, husband, wife, lord, subject, and what is more in divinely established ranks, they are (where they wait of the same rank) as beautiful and adorned before God as a bride at the wedding, or a dock at the high feast.

(45) But the foolish, blind world does not see this, but despises such ranks so shamefully that it must grieve a pious heart. No, she says, what shall I do in the lowly worldly state? I want to serve God and become a monk, a nun, a priest, a hermit. From such prudence, the world has become so full of monasteries and convents, so many different orders and orders, that it criminates and teems with spiritual people. This must have been called a beautiful and fine thing; so they applied this verse to themselves and sang thus: Our work is praise and adornment. They not only took away the praise and adornment of God's work, but also defiled, desecrated and blasphemed it. For it should have been called worldly, dangerous, damning status and life. But their state has been vain salvation and sure blessedness. These sang the verse thus: God's doings are shame and disgrace, unclean and foul.

46 But now the gospel has come again, and praises God again in such his work and pen, and brings praise and adornment back to these estates, and exposes the filth of those men's pen, that they must stand there naked and with shame.

Vau [X]. 6.

And his righteousness endures forever.

These divine estates and orders are ordered by God so that there may be a constant, orderly, peaceful being in the world, and so that justice may be preserved. That is why he calls it "God's justice" here, which is constant and remains always for and for, which the jurists call natural law. For if God had not established these states Himself, and maintained them daily as His work, then it would not be possible for

No spark of right would remain for a moment, but every servant wanted to be master, maid wanted to be wife, farmer wanted to be prince, son wanted to be above father and mother. Summa, it would be worse among humans than among wild animals, since one always eats the other; for God has not ordered such a pen among them. And if men, by their own right, should so order and comprehend, they would never be able to meet it. The emperors and their jurists have enough to do with the secular law, so that they can rightly seize the goods that are due to such estates; what would become of them if they were to order the estates themselves and the natural law? For this reason, the rights of men are not so constant, nor do they remain forever, nor do they pass through all the world, but it is said: *Novus rex, nova lex*; when an empire is changed, its rights also change. But these estates of God go and remain through all kingdoms, as far as the world is, and to the end of the world.

(48) And this verse should be especially well remembered, and we should gladly praise God with it, in that we have God keeping peace in the world, and controlling the turmoil. For the fact that there is not unceasing turmoil and strife comes from the fact that these states are God's work and foundation, which He holds fast, and allows His work and foundation to be challenged with turmoil and disobedience, but not to be overthrown or reversed. It is said that his justice or righteousness remains forever. And if one wants to thank God for temporal peace, this verse belongs to it, with the next one before it, namely, that it is God's work to have different estates in the world, and that they establish justice or righteousness, and thus preserve peace.

49. although this understanding in these two next verses belongs more to the first, previous understanding, to the regiment of the children of Israel, when worldly authority and outward priesthood was, than here among the Christians, because Christ has neither ordered nor established anything in his Christianity from worldly authority, but rather forbade, and his Christians are called, to give to Caesar what is Caesar's [Matth. 22, 21.], than to him who is already established beforehand by God, I have nevertheless described it as-.

1) Therefore they want that on earth there is no people among all men who understand and can teach so well what worldly estates are, as the Christians; they know it, and teach it alone, that they are divine estates and foundations, therefore they alone can give thanks and pray for it in their churches. Otherwise, all reason despises them as dangerous estates, and as having arisen contrary to God's will and command.

50. but our right understanding of this 2) verse is that we thank God here for the ministry and work of Christ and His apostles, who are the right emperor and they the right princes in the spiritual state, to lead the preaching ministry, here in these spiritual offices, to help the souls from sins, death and devils; there is the right adornment and praise, these are beautiful, lovely) fine states; as also St. Paul says from the prophet 4) Isaiah [Cap. 52, 7]: "How lovely are the feet of those who preach the gospel. Paul says from the prophet 4) Isaiah [Cap. 52, 7.], Rom. 10, 15.: "How lovely 5) are the feet of them that preach the gospel." Against this adornment and adornment all the world's adornment is vain dung.

(51) But it does not seem so, because it is condemned for vile, erroneous and seductive states, as we read in the Gospel and see before our eyes. Therefore Christians alone praise and give thanks for it: they recognize it, and see such beautiful adornment and praise well, as manifold, rich, beautiful gifts of right heavenly wisdom, understanding and art, together with all virtue, the Holy Spirit has put on it, and puts on it daily.

And here is the true, eternal righteousness, which does not remain eternal here on earth alone, but rather is eternal there in that life before God. This righteousness is preached, taught and preserved through such spiritual offices, even though it is quite void before the world, and (as it thinks) must soon perish, so that no more impermanent, transient righteousness is before its eyes; but it must nevertheless remain eternal. For it is founded on an eternal rock, on Christ's grace and righteousness, and not on the work of men.

1) In the old editions: "Get Widerumb".

2) Erlanger: this verse.

3) Erlanger: "pretty".

4) The words: "St. Paul from the Prophet" are missing in the Erlanger.

5) Erlanger:], "pretty".

(53) And hereby this verse reproves the loose, rotten rights of men, as of monasteries and convents, with their cobwebs and chaff, that is, with their rules and statutes. For just as he gives thanks to God and praises His monasteries and estates, so he condemns and rejects the monasteries and estates invented by men. Therefore he must also condemn and reject their right or righteousness, as they do not remain forever, but always change, diminish and increase, and are always inconsistent; as they themselves confess and must do in the spiritual right. They still sing this verse: "Our right remains forever, God's righteousness does not have to be. And even if they could remain at the end of the world, they still serve only in external, self-chosen things, as in clothing, food, places, gifts, which pass away and are not valid in that life, nor before God.

Zain [X]. 7.

[He has made a memorial of his miracles.

(54) Then comes the sacrament or mass, which is the memorial of Christ, instituted for us Christians in the New Testament, to which this psalm chiefly refers. For that memorial of the Jews has long since come to an end and has been abolished by Christ. And notice the fine name, so that he calls the sacrament, and says: "A memorial of his miracles"; as Christ himself also calls his memorial, since he says [Luc. 22, 19.]: "These things do in my memory." [1 Cor. 11:24, 25] And it is a blasphemous sacrilege to have made of the mass and sacrament a sacrifice, which one has done for another, and sold among themselves, in order to merit future grace and help, when it ought to be a memorial, which each one is obliged to do for himself, in order to receive the previous grace given and received.

55) The children of Israel themselves did not consider their paschal lamb a sacrifice; they did not sacrifice it, but, as the text says, Exodus 12:4, they slaughtered it; neither did they eat it for one another, nor did they sell it among themselves; each one ate it for himself, in remembrance of the Lord.

of the deeds of God. Hence it is called a memorial of the miracles of God; which memorial also no one has done for the other, but each for himself. And we unholy, ungrateful heathen make of our remembrance a sacrifice and work, which one may do and sell for the other; thus leaving his miracles, and seeking new miracles, which he should do with us, and forget him.

What is "remembrance"? And what are the "miracles of God" that we are to remember in our Easter feast? It is to publicly praise, preach and confess the unspeakable miracles that God has done for us through Christ. Namely, we were condemned in sins, lost in death, imprisoned under the devil; from which he saved us by his blood and death, from sin to righteousness, from death to life, from the devil to God. These are other miracles than the old ones, when he redeemed the children of Israel from the earthly Egypt, from the temporal death, and from the power of the mortal Pharaoh; and he redeemed a little with it, namely the children of Israel. But here is an eternal redemption from all eternal sins, death and devils, and many are redeemed with it, even the whole world. And what shall one say much? There is no likeness here, but as heaven and earth, as temporal and eternal are not to be compared, so also those old miracles are not to be compared to these miracles; for they are hardly a model or sign against these true miracles.

(57) Alas, and alas for our shameful, accursed ingratitude! Those in the Old Testament kept their paschal feast, the remembrance of their miracles, so diligently, so devoutly, so earnestly, that all the books of the prophets are full of them; they made psalms, sang and sounded them, and did all the splendor and glory with them, even though they had no more than the sign and model of our paschal feast. But we, who have righteous miracles, are nevertheless so lazy and lackadaisical, cold and crude about our Easter feast, that we also pay very little attention to the sacrament, and do not oppose it in any other way, as if we were allowed to be nothing at all. And when we hear that Christ has redeemed us with his blood, it moves us just as if Hans had been the one to tell us.

Booby hears that a chicken lays eggs. What miracle is this (he says), it happens every day. So here, too, there is no joy, comfort, thanksgiving or wonder when one hears of Christ's suffering. O what is this new! Who does not know this? I have known it for a long time. And so the dear Christ, with his precious blood and his immeasurable miracles, must be a small thing.

For this reason he has again justified us, and for such damned, infernal ingratitude he has caused us to suffer a strong insanity, so that the mass has been turned into a sacrifice, and Christ's memory has been concealed, until we have had to console, rejoice and marvel not only at our own works, but also at the works of others, and have made monks and priests princes and lords over us, with our bodies and goods. O righteous judge! Whoever despises your memory, and does not console, rejoice, marvel, praise and thank your glorious miracles in God's name, shall be justly comforted and marveled at the foul plates, the stinking caps, and all the abominations of human holiness, in the devil's name, and shall have hellish fire and eternal damnation in addition; over which he must lay his body and goods on earth. This is how such ungrateful, lost people shall be punished.

Here, before and above all the works of God, as stated above [§41], these miraculous deeds should be sought for all pleasure. Here we should reflect, diligently look at and consider what glorious, lovely works these are that Christ has redeemed us from sins, death and the devil. Here we should reckon how we would be if such miracles had not been done for us; what a misery it is to suffer for one sin alone, or for an evil, troubled conscience for one hour. What misery is it to be stuck in death's throes for a day? What a plague is it to be possessed with the devil for a week? And what is all this against the eternal, but a mere nothing?

(60) It is all vain, great things and wonders. The person who does it is the eternal Son of God, and the Holy One of all saints. The need and thing is manifoldly great, much and eternal. There are many people to whom it happens, namely the whole world. So is the

The way and form also manifoldly great, because he has done it through the most bitter, most shameful, most miserable suffering. Summa, in eternity one will not be able to wonder and contemplate enough; and we blocks and stones respect it just when we hear it, as if a rotten apple falls from the tree; on the other hand yawn: O have you not seen more that a rotten apple falls from the tree? Over this some persecute it and condemn it as heresy and sedition. But we will have to pay for it honestly, and we have already begun.

Heth [X] 8.

The gracious and merciful Lord.

Here give tongues and feathers, whoever has tongues and feathers; here sing and sound, whoever can sing and sound, if one would take hold of these words a little. Oh how this is spoken so warmly and kindly for the poor, afflicted sinners and miserable, frightened consciences. For here you hear that he has not instituted his memorial or sacrament out of anger or disgrace. It is not meant to be a poison for you, nor does he want to devour you or be behind you with a club when you go to the sacrament, but he lets himself be called "the gracious and merciful Lord", so that it should be all grace and mercy. He does not put badly his name, GOtt or HErr alone, but "the gracious and merciful HErr". For the name, GOtt and HErr, have something terrible in them, because they are names of majesty. But the surnames, gracious and merciful, have vain comfort and joy in them. And I do not know whether God can be called more lovely in the Scriptures. He would so gladly press it into our hearts with such sweet speech that we should accept and honor his memory with joy and love, with praise and thanksgiving.

(62) Should it not hurt a Christian's heart when he sees the mass being treated so blasphemously and shamefully? Some even deny it, and make vain bread and wine of it. Some sell it, and handle it for the stinking belly. Some make a work of it, so that they frighten the consciences and make them stupid. And none of you let it remain in grace and mercy.

Heartiness, as it is, and the Psalm shows here. And just as God has left His supreme love and grace behind for us in this, so people commit the most shameful, worst abominations with it. For I do not think that a more shameful abomination has come on earth among Christians than the mass market; it will also be the last, that I truly know. Thus the world must do the greatest dishonor to the highest grace of God, otherwise one would not sufficiently notice in lesser pieces of God's grace that it is the world and its God is called the devil; but in this it must be grasped that it honestly carries out its God's will.

63 Therefore, if you are afraid to go to the sacrament, and your conscience frightens you as if you were unworthy of it, put this verse in your heart and mouth, and you will hear and feel how warmly he calls and entices you, and is there waiting for you, having opened his hands and heart and everything, so that you may receive and receive grace and mercy. He does not want you to flee from him and be afraid, but to flee to him and go to him with all confidence. He is called in this place no other name than "the gracious and merciful Lord". Give him no other name in your heart; make him no other name in your conscience; you do him wrong and the greatest harm, and yourself the greatest harm. For if thou call him otherwise, or think otherwise of him in thy heart, thou makest him a liar, and condemnest this verse, believing thy false heart rather than God himself, and such his tender, sweet words, and thereby making thyself an idol unto thee, and worshipping thy heart, and fearing thyself; as it is said, He is afraid of his own shadow.

Whoever would like to have tablets placed on the altar should have Christ's Last Supper painted and these two verses: "The gracious and merciful Lord has established a memorial of his miracles," written around it in large golden letters, so that they stand before the eyes, so that the heart remembers them, and so that the eyes must praise and thank God by reading them. For since the altar is arranged for the sacrament to be performed on it, it would be impossible to

The other images, of God or Christ, may well be painted in other places.

65 In this verse, not only is the fruit and benefit of the sacrament expressed, that it is a gracious, merciful institution in which one should seek and find grace and mercy, but also the memory of Christ is praised. For what is Christ's suffering but the same grace and mercy that is offered, given, and communicated to us through the Sacrament? "Grace" is that He has shown us all benefits, through His blood has brought us from sins to righteousness, from death to life, from the devil to God. "Mercy" is that he forgives our sin without ceasing, spares and bears our ingratitude and all the evil in which we are still stuck as long as we live in the flesh. All of which he once purchased for us through his suffering, and daily offers and gives through his memorial or sacrament, also driving us up to it with such sweet and kind words.

(66) But again, to the saints of works, who make a sacrifice and merit of the memorial and sacrament, and otherwise teach vain works, he cannot be gracious nor merciful. For they do not let it remain in his memory, therefore he must be angry and fierce with them, they want to have it so, and turn this verse thus: He has instituted a sacrifice, the strict and serious judge. For they want to propitiate him with the mass, as an angry tyrant; do not seek to receive grace and mercy from him in vain, but sacrifice and give him their own work, that they may appease his anger. And as they think him an angry judge, so they find him; as they think, so it befaller them. For if he is to be gracious and charitable, he must do it to those who need it. If he is to be merciful and patient, he must also do it to those who need it. But they do not need it, for their actions and nature are pure holiness and right, and they have no need of grace or mercy, but have so much other holiness for themselves that they can sell it to others, and sacrifice and earn it for them. What should then the gracious and merciful

How can the hearty Lord manage this? He must have poor sinners, wretched consciences, afflicted hearts, where he can apply his grace and mercy, to his praise and glory.

Thet [X]. 9.

[He gives food to those who fear him.

Here he begins to describe how the memorial of Christ proceeds and what is done in it. First, he gives thanks that God gives food, and such food as is for the godly, and not for the belly. There is indeed bodily bread and wine, and bodily food; but it feeds not the body, but the soul, for it is not bad bodily bread and wine, but the true body and blood of Christ, as he says, "This is my body, this is my blood," ordained by his word that it should feed the soul in faith unto eternal life.

68 And it is a necessary addition that he says, "those who fear him," for the sake of the wild, crude people who need the grace of God for their courage and to cover their wickedness; they run to it with foolishness, without discipline and timidity, like swine to the trough. Ah! they say, it is all grace and mercy, so I will also go, I must not be afraid, he will not devour me. Just as if the Sacrament was instituted for show or play. For they have neither hunger nor thirst for grace, pay no attention to sin, do not mend their ways, are secure and without gloom, in a good and easy spirit. Such raw and impenitent hearts do not find this food, even though they have received the Sacrament, but must be those who fear God, that is, who are afraid of His wrath and anger, who have sorrowful and troubled minds, of which we have said and heard much elsewhere.

Iodine [X]. 10.

He remembers his covenant forever.

69 Secondly, in this sacrament one keeps the memory of his covenant, which Christ instituted in it. Therefore the verse says that he does it, and remembers his covenant. For it is not our foundation nor our work, but his alone, and he does it.

through and in us. For he does not speak of the secret memory in the heart, but of the public, oral memory, of which Christ says, "Do these things in remembrance of me." Which is done through the preaching and word of God, which is his memory, which he established, as was said above [§ 14], and also lasts forever until the end of the world, and is therefore in the sacrament not only food, but also the word of God.

But "his covenant" he no longer calls the ten commandments or the old law, but the new testament, the gospel; as he himself says, "This is the cup of the new testament." For testament and covenant is One Thing in the Hebrew, and is called Berith [XXXX], wherein He so connects Himself with us, that whosoever believeth on Him should be saved through His blood and suffering, which He holds out to us through the Gospel. And is not otherwise than as the two preceding verses say, "a memorial of his miracles" which he did for us. And this is the covenant which all the world challenges and condemns as the highest heresy. For they will not suffer us to be saved without works, through faith alone in Christ alone; and would have long since perished and been forgotten, if he had not stood so firm over it, and let us remember him. But he will not and cannot forget it, but remembers it, and still lets the gospel remain on earth, in the midst of so many mobs, insanity, the doctrine of men, tyrants and devils. For where would we have it now, if Christ had not preserved it from the time of the apostles until this time? Whether the sophists have trampled it underfoot, put it under the bank, despised and condemned it, it has remained through him who remembers it forever.

Caph [X]. 11.

[He proclaims to his people the power of his works.

71 Thirdly, in this remembrance he proclaims to us the mighty and powerful miracles he performed for us, when he drowned our sins in his blood, strangled our death in his body, and overcame and subdued the devil's power by his death and resurrection; and all of this without

He did it by himself alone, and in himself alone. These are other miracles than the old ones, when he drowned king Pharaoh in the Red Sea, struck king Schon, and strangled king Og. Of these mighty miracles the Christians have eternally to preach; though they preach it not (saith he), but the Lord preacheth. For he will not let it be our work, as it is not ours, but he has instituted it, and also gives spirit and grace to it, and he himself does it through us.

Lamed [X]. 12.

That he may give them the inheritance of the Gentiles.

72) Fourthly, he makes such preaching so strong and powerful that through it the Gentiles are converted to Christians, as has happened since the time of the apostles, and still happens daily. For we are all born Gentiles and not Jews, who have had the gospel until now. But in the New Testament he does not give inheritance to the Gentiles bodily, as he gave to the children of Israel, but spiritually, that is, where before Gentiles were, dwelt and inherited, there are now Christians; as the 2nd Psalm, v. 8, also says: "I will give you the Gentiles for an inheritance." All this happens through the preaching of his powerful miracles, and the Gentiles are driven out spiritually with it and their idols are destroyed; because his word is fruitful and does not come back empty, Isa. 55, 11.

Mem [X]. 13.

[The works of his hands are truth and justice.

Seventy-three: The fifth. So far he has spoken of the doctrine, now he comes to the works. God has some special 1) works of his own, which are also preached in the Christian church. These are not the works of creation, mentioned in the third verse; nor are they the positions and offices that he does through men, mentioned in the fifth verse; but they are works that he does himself, and they are called the works of his hands, just as a potter makes a pot with his hands;

1) Erlanger: sonder.

and is our Lord's handiwork, and we are his clay or glue; he is the carpenter, we are the wood. The work is the dear holy cross, which must follow the teaching of the gospel.

Here he is carpentering and working on us, courting and carving us, so that he kills the old man in us, along with his wisdom, prudence, holiness, yes, with all his vices, and thus prepares us perfectly, so that we are a fine new creature. For this he must take great axes, hatchets, saws, wedges (for it is an old dehnich 1) bellows and rogue, the old Adam), that is, evil tyrants, devils, red spirits, false brothers, hunger, pestilence, disease, dungeon, rope, sword. And who can tell them all?

Such work of God lasts until death. It is through such work that Christianity has become so great and strong. Through it the dear martyrs have gone to heaven. Through it the holy fathers have been enlightened in the Scriptures. Through it, experienced, skillful Christians became useful to advise and help in all things. Through this they become bold and equipped to fight against the devil and sin. This makes them capable of all good works. And in sum, by this faith is exercised, the gospel is sharpened, and Christians become a righteous work and new creature of God.

This is a work that we suffer from God, and do not do; therefore it is called "the work of his hands," and is almost to be preached among Christians, that they may follow Christ in his suffering and become like him. For he was also made and prepared, not only to deliver us from the devil, but also to be an example for us to follow (says St. Peter [1 Ep. 2, 21]) and to become like him, Rom. 8, 29.

Now this work almost hurts Adam, and all reason in all the world does not consider it to be God's work, it must be called the devil's, and those who suffer such must not be called God's work, but must be abandoned by him; so it is 2). Against such

He calls such works, truth and right, judgment, and so they are also praised among Christians. "Truth" means that which is faithful, certain and righteous, since there is no falsehood or deceit in it. "Right" is that which we call just, or not unjust. This is so much to say: Whichever Christian is thus carpentered and prepared by God, is and becomes a righteous new creature of God, in which no false appearance or hypocrisy remains, but becomes vain truth and righteousness with him. So it does not happen to him unjustly, but quite rightly. For he has the old Adam in him, who is allowed such carpentry; and if he were not carpentered in this way, he would be wronged, and would never become a true, righteous Christian; the old mischievousness would remain too strong in him, and would be an appearance and a shadow of a Christian.

78 We use to say this in few words: Dear friend, that God punishes us like this, or deals with us like this, is right, we have well deserved it. So it does us no harm, but rather pacifies us so that we become all the more pious. For ruth makes pious children, God means well with us as a faithful father, and much more like that. For Christians know how to teach the fruit and piety 3) of the cross. But the world and reason cannot do this, but, however little it suffers, it cries out about violence and injustice, that it does not deserve it, that evil is done to it for good; and so henceforth it knows how to emphasize its innocence and merit, and to blaspheme and desecrate such God's work, becomes neither better, nor a truly righteous man out of it, but much worse, and full of false, evil deceit, to avenge itself. Therefore, it is not everyone's art, but only the Christian's, to sing this verse, and to give thanks and praise in tribulation and suffering.

Now 14.

All his commandments are righteous.

79) Sixth, he also praises the other doctrines and teachings that God has given to Christians, which are, according to faith, the following

3) In Luther, "Frommen" is masculine.

1) dehnisch (denisch, denesch) - stretchable, tough.

2) So the Wittenbergers; Jenaers and Erlanger: siehets sichs.

Doctrine of love and good works. And is one opinion with the interpretation, so above [§ 18] is said. For the doctrine of Christians does not deal with children's works, as the hypocrites and teachers of men do with their commandments concerning food, clothing, houses, and such like outward gestures, which are of no use and help no one, but with righteous works, which are honest to God and useful to the neighbor, as they do good, help, counsel, forbear, spare, teach, pray, and the like. And, indeed, it is right to give thanks and praise to God for such grace and teaching, since we are sure that it teaches righteous good works that endure forever before God and the world. For we see well, and have experienced well, what misery it is to be caught and afflicted with the teachings and works of men, groping in darkness, doing much, and yet not knowing what one is doing, or how one's turn is with God, and in addition everything and everything is lost, in vain and condemned.

Samech [X]. 16.

[V. 8.], Forever and ever they shall be preserved.

80] The seventh grace is that he not only gives fine, righteous doctrine, but also receives it, as is also said above [§ 19]: Non minor est virtus, quam quaerere, parta tueri, it is as great grace that he receives such teaching as that he gives it. For it is a sign which all devils and all the world contradict [Luc. 2, 34.], and do not rest until they overthrow it with so much violence and cunning, with so much heresy and doctrine of men; and though many fall away deceived, yet it remains. It is said: "God's word remains forever" [Is. 40, 8]. And if God had not held so firmly and strongly, not a word of the entire Holy Scripture or Gospel would have remained, and neither baptism nor the sacrament would have been left, as it happened with the Turks. The devil would have eliminated them from the world long ago. But praise and thanks be to you who preserves them, and even if the tyrants burn and cut much, as they did and still do, they still have to let it stay, says this verse.

On [X]. 16.

Done in truth and sincerely.

81. eighth, praise and thanks be to God that he not only preserves his teachings in the book and on the preaching platform, or in the oral word, but also gives grace that they be done and lived by, that they not only be preached, but also be done in deed. For there must be devout Christians and living saints on earth who have pure faith and do righteous good works; as the article of our faith demands, "I believe a holy Christian church," which cannot be false, and yet would have to be false, if there were no more living saints on earth who believed and kept God's commandment. But that they are still on earth is not by human power, but by divine grace. For he does not say, "They are done," but, "They are done." He does not praise men, but God alone, that such teachings are done; it is he who does and speaks all things in us, as John 15:5 says, "Without me you can do nothing," and Paul [Gal. 2:20], "But Christ lives in me."

But the fact that he adds, "In truth and sincerely," has the opinion that such commandments are done among Christians righteously and not falsely in appearance, and also of right, simple opinion. For truth he sets against the hypocrites, who also pretend to keep God's commandment, and yet are all sham and pretense, doing nothing from the heart, but forced, for fear of hell or punishment; but where the heart is not in the work, there is no truth nor right work. And I think that we Germans translate the Hebrew word Emeth [XXX], veritas, truth, thus: right. As when we say: This is the right God, this is the right gospel, this is the right church; so that we indicate against the false church, [against a false] gospel, [against a false] 1) God the true God, the true church, the true gospel; so also, the true works against the false works we call the right works. But the word, Jaschar, which is called in Latin aequitas, rectitudo, and I in German "auf-".

1) The bracketed words are added by us.

Right" means so much that a Christian does not do good out of favor, nor for reward, nor for the sake of some person's reputation, but out of a free, pure, right, simple heart; does not seek his own, nor love or harm anyone, but does good only for the glory of God and the good of his neighbor, not as the hirelings and the selfish and ambitious do. That "truth" is against works done without heart; "sincere" against works from a selfish heart that is bent on itself. These two words St. Paul uses to call *simplicitatem et sinceritatem*, as he teaches us to be simple and sincere children of God [1 Cor. 5:8].

Phes [X]. 17.

[He sends redemption to his people.

In the ninth place, he praises God that he does not leave his Christians always in torment and torment without ceasing, but controls the tyrants, or gives gracious princes and peace to his wretched children, as Lucas writes in Acts 9, 31. 9, 31, that after the persecution that arose against St. Stephen, the church was at peace everywhere, and built itself up in the fear of God 2c. For if the church were to be stuck in persecution without ceasing, and not occasionally take a breath of air and refresh itself, it would finally become too weary and would fall, as the 125th Psalm, v. 3, also says: "The Lord does not let the heap of the wicked remain above the heap of the righteous, lest the righteous stretch out their hand to unrighteousness." And Paul often boasts that he has been delivered many times from many tribulations and hardships. A Christian must truly know that his suffering will come to an end and will not last forever; otherwise he would be like a damned Judas who would despair and blaspheme God. That is why St. Peter [1 Ep. 1, 6] calls it "a little suffering", and Psalm 8, 6 "a little time of God's lack", so that a Christian may look over his affliction and grasp the end.

Habest. [X]. 18.

He gives his covenant forever.

84. tenth, he praises God for not throwing away his Christians, whether they are weak in faith or not.

or are frail and alive. For Christianity may err and fall short, but it does not remain in error or sin. On the other hand, it has the covenant of grace, in which Christ has become a mercy seat for it, and always holds out forgiveness of sins, which it grasps with faith, as the article says: "I believe the forgiveness of sins"; and seeks and obtains with the Lord's Prayer, saying: "Forgive us our trespasses. For all Christianity is not so without spot and wrinkle here on earth, but there it shall become so, says St. Paul; nor is it so holy in itself that it is without sin, but in Christ it is holy, in itself it is still full of sin; as St. Paul teaches powerfully Rom. 7:18. that in his flesh there is nothing good. If there is nothing good in Paul's flesh, and he is a captive servant of sins, who is one of the best and holiest members of Christianity, how should not all Christianity in lesser members have sin in the flesh and serve sin? All the saints must pray this verse, Psalm 19:13: "Who can see all the faults? Lord, cleanse me from the secret ones." And Psalm 25:11: "For thy name's sake, O Lord, be merciful to my sin, for it is great."

Therefore, it is dangerous teachers and harmful speeches to make articles of faith from the work or word of the holy church. For the church itself does not judge itself according to its own work and word, but according to the word of God; it knows well that it can err and fail, and must correct and change such errors and mistakes according to the word of God, which alone cannot err. Therefore, it is not a good thing to throw out a word or work of the holy church without God's word. There one is not at all guilty of believing it as an article, but one should hold it or let it be suspected as a wrinkle or stain, that is, an error or fault of the holy church, as it cannot be without sin and fault in this life, and should judge and amend it according to the word of God, and thus burn the hay, straw, and wood, so that it may nevertheless remain blessed on the ground of divine word, as through the fire, as St. Paul teaches 1 Corinthians 3:3. Paul teaches 1 Cor. 3, 13. ff.

86) So this verse says that God is to be praised, who has not based His gracious covenant of forgiveness of sins on our merit, but on His word, and has commanded and still commands that He should stand firm and forever, not falling down when we sin, nor rising up when we are pious, but standing for Himself at God's command, that we may go to Him every moment and always find forgiveness of sins. For since there is eternal sin in our flesh as long as we live on earth, and since there is no end nor cessation of sin and error, we must indeed have eternal and everlasting forgiveness, so that we may not live under wrath because of sins, but under grace because of forgiveness. Behold, this is "his eternal blind," which he holds fast, not wavering, that our heart may be sure that his sins shall not condemn it; whereof we shall praise and give thanks unto him in all the churches.

Kuff [X]. 19.

His name is holy and noble.

(87) Eleventhly, from such holy and glorious works he has a great and glorious name, for he who has the deed should also have the name and the honor. Although his name has been spread throughout the world, it is not held sacred and honorable anywhere except in the council of the upright, or among Christians, among whom alone his miracles are recognized and praised; they had his name beautifully and honestly, not only with verbal praise, but also with heartfelt recognition. For they know that they shall have neither honor nor name from such miracles, leaving him only such name and honor, with fear and humility. That is, to keep his name holy and honorable. But those who want to be something, and seek glory or name, if they are nothing, desecrate and dishonor his name, as the hypocrites and hopeful saints do, who praise themselves more and more, and not some work of God; of which more is said elsewhere.

(88) But we have the great, unspeakable honor of being able to live according to such God.

We are called by His name, baptized into it, and called by it, so that His name and ours become one name, as we have such a God who does such great things for us, from which we are called God's people, God's servants, God's inheritance, God's kingdom, God's temple, God's work, and many other names; for which names we are also held holy and honorable, not in the eyes of the world, but in the eyes of the saints, and in the eyes of all the angels in heaven. And so we not only have such great wonders of God, but also such a holy name and glorious honor. For it is an exceedingly worthy and glorious honor when a man may boast of God that he is God's servant, child, people, compared to which honor of all bets is nothing. But the world does not respect such honor, seeks honor from men, as Christ says Jn 5:44: "How can you believe, taking honor from one another?"

89. Where are they now who would have honor, yet do not know how to get it? always seek and find nothing. If you want honor, leave all honor to God alone, and keep nothing but shame before Him. Despise thyself, and let thy deeds be nothing, and hallow the name of God, and give glory to him alone. Behold, as soon as thou doest this, thou art already full of honors greater than the honors of all kings, and abideth forever; for God adorneth thee and honors thee with His name, that thou must be called God's servant, God's child, God's work, and so on. What more should God do to you, who gives you such a temporal and eternal lattice, as well as the highest, even His own name and eternal honor? I mean, he should be worthy of heartfelt thanks and praise; who can ever thank and praise enough for such pieces of one? Yes, the competition blasphemes and persecutes both his work and name, and remains only in the council of the pious such praise and thanks.

Resch [X]. 20.

[Fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

After the praise and thanksgiving for all the miraculous deeds of God, he concludes the psalm with an admonition and teaching. As if he should say:

Quis sapiens et intelligens haec? Where are here 1) wise people who understand such thing? It is great wisdom, where one knows such. But how does one come to it? The world does not respect it, therefore it must remain mad. But if one wants to begin to become wise, he must fear God; he must take it for God's word, and then all things will be learned. For this is the certain error, that many people hear the word of God (which is the vain wisdom of God), and yet learn nothing from it, because they consider it to be a word, but not the word of God. For they think they can do it as soon as they hear it; but if they thought it was certainly God's word, they would certainly think thus: "Well, God is wiser than you, and will say something greater: 2) "Dear man, let us listen with earnestness and with fear, as it is fitting to listen to a God. Behold, the heart sows and wants to become wise, for it wants to hear God's word with earnestness; for God can teach them all things by his word.

91. But the rough, impudent hearts think: O, what shall I hear? I already know it well, and better than he who says it; I have long heard it well. Behold, these are despisers of God, who do not fear Him, nor do they take His word for God's word; therefore they cannot learn anything nor become wise. For he who sincerely holds God's word to be God's word knows well that he will remain his disciple and disciple forever; the others become masters of God's word in the first flight, judging and judging it freshly, until they finally get so far away from it that they condemn it as heresy. As the fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom, so again the contempt of God is the beginning of all foolishness. So the prophet wants to teach us with this verse that we should hear his words with fear and seriousness, so that we will become wise to understand his song. For "to fear God" is to fear and honor his word, for without God's word we cannot have God.

1) Wittenberg and Jena: the.

2) Erlanger: Great.

Harness 21.

This is a fine wisdom of all who do it.

This is said against such false hypocrites and despisers, who think themselves so wise that they have learned God's word, and know all that they hear; as now the race is full, not only of those who do not fear God, but also of those who pretend to fear God, and know how to talk much about it, and yet live and strive against it in deed, and when it comes to a meeting, they deny and persecute it. Of them St. Paul says Titus 2:16: "They say that they know God, but in deed they deny Him"; and 1 Corinthians 4:20: "The kingdom of God is not in words, but in power"; and Christ Matthew 7:21: "They shall not enter into heaven that say unto me, Lord, Lord; but they that do my Father's will." David is speaking to the same masters 3) and thin ones, and says: "Yes, you are wise and know everything; but that would be fine wisdom, if you would also do it with your life.

Thau [X]. 22.

Their glory endures forever.

Then he touches their heart, that they seek nothing but their own praise, profit and honor in the word of God; therefore they learn nothing but to talk about it and not to live by it, just as St. Paul says in Gal. 6:13 that such launderers seek vain honor. But the glory will not last long, and will leave a stink behind in the end. But he who lives according to the word of God has eternal praise and honor from it, whose glory has no end; for he is adorned with God's name (which is eternal), and adorned with divine honor, which has no end, as is said above 88. 89]. For this, God our Father, in Christ Jesus, help us by His Holy Spirit, amen.

3) Walch and the Erlanger: Meisterklügeln.

27. interpretation of the 112th Psalm,*)

of riches, honor and pleasure, as the righteous make good use of them and the wicked abuse them.

Preached and gone out Anno 1526.

1.¹) This psalm was made and is to be sung so that the pious may be comforted against avarice, temporal honor and pleasure on earth. For the prophet has seen how the heart of man strives day and night for good and honor, how it leads up by force, and seeks how it may have pleasure and joy here. For the three things are common on earth, as St. John also says in his first epistle in the next chapter, v. 16: "All that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of goods."

Item 2: The prophet sees further how it has a beginning and an end with those who are so covetous without all fear of God, who want to strive and exalt themselves, and who live against God in the lust of the flesh. Likewise, he also sees how it is with those who do not touch such things with iniquity, without the will of God, as riches, honor and pleasure, but wait and receive them from God.

3) But the contradiction can be seen at once, for here the psalm says, and reason cannot send itself into it; it looks upon the pious as beggars, as those who must starve, and are the footcloth of all the world, who live in no pleasure and joy, but in everything.

Unpleasantness, shame and disgrace lie. And the prophet touches this also in the text, when he speaks of the enemies, that he will have enemies who will be displeased. That is a bad property, which one has among the enemies; he is not safe, must stand all hours in Fahr Leibes and the property, which the ungodly may not possess theirs well with peace; as a common saying is: The worse rogue, the better luck; and: The pious must suffer much.

4th Now cometh the prophet, and sings another little song, and saith, It shall be well with him that is devout; and yet he is looked upon differently in the world. But these are words of the spirit; reason might well say, it is a lie; one sees that the pious are oppressed. But reason cannot judge the words of the Spirit; it must be grasped with faith, not groped at with the hands; it must not be looked at as it stands before the eyes, but held from the beginning to the end, and then it will be found to be true, as the prophet says, that the righteous lack nothing, neither in riches, nor honor, nor pleasure; and again, that the wicked do not lose their privileges.

First, let us look at avarice. Even if the rich rally around each other for a long time, their possessions will still melt away in the end. We have experienced this in many examples, including our own.

1) In the original, the title is set here once again, and the text of the whole psalm. We have omitted this, as has Walch, because the title is already given above, and the text precedes the interpretation of each verse.

*Luther preached on this Psalm in 1526, as Mathesius ("Mathesius", St. Louis edition, p. 87) also testifies. The Wittenberg edition notes, "Whoever copied the interpretation and put it into print is unaware, for he does not indicate his name." A single edition was published by Hans Weiß in Wittenberg under the title: "Der hundert vnd zwelfte Psalm Davids, von reichthumb, ehr und lust, wie die gerechten der wol gebrauchen, vud die gotlvsen misbrauchen, gepredigt durch Mar. Luth. Wittenberg 1. 5. 26." At the end: "Gedrückt zu Wittemberg durch Hans Weiß 1526." The Erlangen edition notes yet another edition that has essentially the same title, but gives neither place nor printer nor year of printing. In the collections: in the Wittenberg (1553), Vol. III, p. 260; in the Eisleben, Vol. I, p. 222; in the Altenburg, Vol. III, p. 320; in the Leipzig, Vol. VI, p. 459 and in the Erlangen, Vol. 40, p. 240. This interpretation is not found in the Jena. Presumably this is the reason for the oversight that it was included in the Eisleben edition, as it had not been printed in the collections before, although it is found in the Wittenberg edition. The text of the latter, which is based on the same postscript as the one reproduced by us according to the original edition, is very much altered, especially with many additions, so a comparison with it is pointless.

Times that many great, powerful and rich men have come to great poverty. How has it happened with some princes in our times, as with the princes of Bavaria, who have collected large, powerful property, and yet not used; yes, when they laid down the head, there was a quarrel and war over the property. This is how it usually happens when people scrape, scrape and scrape out of avarice, and bring large nuggets of gold in heaps; he who gathers it has nothing to gain from it but toil and labor, and is a servant of money; when he lays the head, there is a war over it; this is the fruit that comes from such avarice. Now you may think whether it is riches to have boxes and chests, all barrels, floors and cellars full; yes, it is rather all heartache and misfortune. For they do not really need it. So does the pope with his cardinals and courtiers, collecting great goods and money. What comes of it? Nothing else, except that they cause trouble and all kinds of misfortune.

(6) So also: A citizen has some son, to whom he collects money and property, house, fields and meadows, and says: Now my son is provided for, has enough. Then the father dies, and the son goes there, takes the property in hand, and comes, that he himself does not know where it has gone; so it goes there, as it came here. So it goes in the world, the good has no continuance. For the Scripture cannot lie. But we are so blind, we cannot see it; we look only at what exists, we cannot compare the end with the beginning. We only look at the guilders that are in the treasury, but do not see the misfortune next to it. For where we have wealth, we must have enemies with us, and be in great trouble; we must worry here, worry there, and look into every corner of the house; we must worry that it will not be stolen, that the moths will not eat it, or that the fire will come and consume it. This is indeed a bad wealth, since the heart has to stand in worries and does not have a quiet hour; and even if he brings something in heaps, the heir will cause misfortune because of it in the end.

(7) So then, when the prophet sees how things are in the world, that all the world is struggling in this way

If we want to be rich, he suggests a proper way for us to become rich, and sings us a fine song, if only we would listen to it.

8 Secondly, it is a vice here to strive for honor. Many are found who study to become great doctors and want to come to the courts of princes and be highly respected, which hardly one among ten succeeds in doing: so the effort and work that he and the schoolmaster have had with him is lost. And even though some of them succeed in becoming great lords, the majority of them become boys, or finally fall out of favor with their lords, and even fall into ashes. Why is that? They did not start out right. For those who start a thing on their own initiative do not even ask the one who is above us about it, since all things are his, and it would be fair to welcome him for that. But the journeymen want to climb up and not ask God for advice or wish Him good morning. Thus says God: If you will not ask me beforehand, I may well push you down.

(9) Thus it often happens that a man comes to great honors and rises high, but afterward he is beaten down and so despised that his shoes are hardly wiped on him; and even if he remains in such honors, he will see so many enemies and opponents that he cannot have a safe hour, and in the end he will become a disgrace to his children or heirs. For we shall never be able to remain in honor by our own conduct; God cannot suffer it, he will blow into it, and it will spill out at the window, at the door, and at the store, so that no one will know where it goes. David and the other patriarchs and prophets did not seek their honor in this way.

Third, the air is there. It is also not good if one wants to reach for it and not ask God for it. [It happens that a young journeyman takes a fine young maiden in marriage to him, so that he may have his pleasure with her, and it is reversed for him; such displeasure occurs that they do not have a good day with each other, but heartache.

So also: two companions go to the dance, want to have a good courage; [it] happens that they disagree about things, and hit each other over the heads. This happens because we do not ask God before; he wants to be welcomed, that is bad. If a citizen could not bear that someone should enter his house uninvited; if someone wanted to go into his cellar, pierce and serve him the very best wine, sit in his chamber, drink, sing and shout, he should watch him for a while, but at last take him by the throat and lead him out of the house, and say: You should have asked me earlier to give you a good drink, it should not have been denied to you. So God can much less suffer that one sits in lust without his will; he wants that one tells him a bonum mane beforehand [Is. 57, 11.]. So we go here, do not pay attention to him, consider him a painted or dead idol. And even though God will watch for a while, at the end he will throw it in so hard that you will wish you had never started it.

(11) Therefore, we must not look at the three things as they are going on now, but look at the beginning and the end, and we will know that this is how things are in the world: what we do not begin with God must fall apart and will not succeed. But if we seek riches, honor and pleasure with the fear of God, it shall go well and prosper. Let us now see how the prophet speaks of it, who says thus:

V. 1. Blessed is he who fears the Lord, who delights in his commandments.

(12) This is a fine verse, wherein is written this opinion of the Spirit: If thou wilt be great, look to God. One must first understand the words. So he says, "Blessed is he who fears the Lord." As if he wanted to speak: Let them not prosper, nor be rich, nor be highly esteemed, that think they have riches, and honor, and pleasure; but they are not. It may seem so, but look at their heart and the end, and it will be much different. If they

If they had no other misfortune than 1) not to be defrauded of riches, it would be misfortune and heartache enough.

(13) We see this in princes and lords. One has a good land, but is not content with it; he would like to have two more. Another also has a land, but is not satisfied with it either, hates another who also has something, and would like to have it for his own; so they saw a quarrel, seek a cause as they can. Hence it comes that the princes of the matter are not one. Squire avarice does it, they cannot get along, there is no satisfaction. They would all have enough, each in his own country; but there the heart cannot have rest, they think and think again how they can bring it about, and yet they cannot; for God does not want to grant it to them, refuses them; thus they never become happy nor cheerful. So did the great Alexander. Once he came to a sermon, where he heard a philosopher say that there were so many people in the world; then he sighed in his heart and said: "Oh God, there are still more wagers, and I have hardly brought one under me, how will I get the others? The stingy belly could not be satisfied with one world, he had a wide heart, wanted to put more bets in it, and yet could not really use what he had.

(14) As we all do, we turn our heart from that which we have to another which we have not; so neither have we that which we possess. For the heart stands not on that which it has, but on that which it has not; therefore he hath, and hath not. For that which he has, he can "lightly use; and that which he hath not, he cannot have. So he sits down between two chairs, so that he gets none. So it happens to him like your dog there in the Aesopo, 2) which had stolen a piece of meat, and ran through a water, and saw the bill in the water, and thought he saw a right piece of meat, snatched at your bill and lost the piece of meat, which he had in his mouth, and the bill with it. This is what happens to all those who are not satisfied with their possessions, who want to reach further and have more.

1) Original: when.

2) küneclrus, lid. I, kind. IV.

They have stolen the first, like the dog the meat, with avarice to itself, robbed, or with deception to itself brought; they have not yet enough, want to snatch further, and lose both. That which they have they do not need, they do not want, 1) and the other they cannot obtain; and it serves them right. Therefore, they must not be envied for what they have, for they are hard enough hit, the wretched people, and they still do not want to recognize it.

15 But the prophet says, "Blessed is he who fears the Lord. What is fearing God? Fearing God is the right service of God, as he says in the next Psalm [Ps. 111:10]: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and is really nothing else than having God before one's eyes. He who does this has enough temporally and eternally; for he keeps his commandment, gives his honor to GOD; he exalts GOD as he is to be exalted, so GOD cannot refrain from it, he must exalt him again; as he speaks 1 Sam. 2, 30.: "Whoever honors me, him I will also honor; but whoever despises me, he will be reviled." We have experienced that if we fear and honor God, the way is prepared for us to be rich and blessed, and to have enough for this purpose. The children of the world cannot do this; they take hold of God's office and seek only their own within it. But those who fear God do not take possession of goods without His will. This is the difference between those who fear him and those who do not.

16. the right service of God is not that you want to sacrifice calves, he does not like them; that you give him a penny or three, he is not allowed to her, he does not want to be paid with a party; he does not respect such sacrifices; he wants to have the whole heart [Ps. 50, 9. ff.] Therefore the fear of God is nothing else but service. With this we take hold of God's heart, that we fear Him and have awe of Him, and honor Him in all things; fearing that He may see all that we do; holding nothing else but that He may have His eyes upon us. So I do nothing, but remember, O Lord, that it may not displease thee. A

Such a heart would gladly do nothing to displease God. And if such a one stumbles at times, he goes back and says, "O Lord God, I have done evil! Such a person is always in fear and awe of God. Thus, his whole life is bound up in the fear of God. Such a man must not make any rules, for he wants all his life to be directed according to the will of God; and even if he forgets God at times because of the weakness of his flesh, and stumbles a little, he does not remain in the mud, but turns to God, and says: "O Lord, cover up until you are merciful; I should have done better, but unfortunately I did not. If, then, we fear and honor God, we leave avarice alone and do not attack anything, for we have leave from God, and say: O Lord, if it pleases you, let it be done; if it does not please you, let it remain. Thine is too much wealth, honor and pleasure.

17. but the wicked, who does not fear GOD, thinks that GOD does not see him, that he has gone to the land of the moors, that he has other business before him; he does not care where it comes from. He doesn't ask GOTT about it, doesn't offer him a good morning; just rips raps into my sack, there's no bottom. God watches; but in the end it certainly goes to failure, it cannot last. And even if it remains the same to him, it still goes over the children, who have to become beggars. We have seen many examples of this, and the saying remains true 1 Sam. 2:30: "He who honors me will be honored; he who despises me will be reviled." He must be put to shame, and no one can defend him. He who honors God and delights in His commandments has the fruits that follow here in the text.

V. 2: Its seed will be mighty on earth, the generation of the upright will be blessed.

18 This text is clear, it needs no gloss. It describes the fruits of the godly, what they should expect, and says: "His seed shall be mighty in the earth." The kingdom and regiment of the Jews at that time had such a form that they all had to become married; not as under the pope, who had the married state under

1) That is, it does not benefit them.

They sang and read this verse and did not understand it, because it did not want to rhyme with their status. But the prophet was referring to the Jewish people with this verse, and not to the Pabst's spiritual state. For this is a useless people, they do not concern themselves with anything, they can do nothing, their mind is set on having good days here for a while, they do no trade, work nothing, do not plow, do none of the things that God has commanded. They should preach and teach the others who work, but they do not; they are an idle people, therefore they can neither govern nor keep house; they do nothing but whine in church, eat, drink, sleep, and are like fattening pigs. Therefore they remain sticks, coarse dolts and lazy rascals.

Nineteen: But he that hath an office, and doeth any trade, must know many things. If he is a farmer, he has his hands full in the field, in the house with the maidservants and with the farmhands. And when he is happy, people become angry with him, gain enmity; then one takes a maid from him, the other a servant; and so it is no different than that: Resist here, resist there; laziness will probably prevent him from doing all that. So it is in other trades and crafts, 1) also with negation and housekeeping, they have enough to do. Experienced people can talk about things and teach other people. The papacy cannot do that; they lie in the mud like a pig on the Kobe.

(20) But the Jews were well acquainted with all things. Of this David says: "Those who fear God, their seed shall become mighty on the earth, their goods shall gain a continuance; for they have not sought good and honor without God's will. So they are blessed; and the children also received the blessing, so that they become much greater and mightier than their fathers. Why? Because they have given glory to God. Again, there is no continuation not with those who so oppose God.

God is stingy, scratch, scrape and scrape; their children shall not enjoy it. Keep it together, so the beginning will not rhyme with the end. They plump into it without all fear of God, that is not the point, as they had it in mind; there are few of them who accept it with fear of God, who trust in God. For the whole world is possessed with avarice [1 John 5:19], only rips raps on my heap; let them not tell, believe it not, till it come into their hand, and become beggars. It serves them right; they want to hurry, and do not ask God for it. Therefore keep still. But if thou wilt ever so journey without the fear of God, well then, if thou wilt become a poor bungler, only remember that it shall be done unto thee; and though the text may seem to thee to be false, yet in the end it shall come to pass that the words cannot lie. Continue in the Psalm:

The lineage of the sincere will be blessed.

21. why will the seed of the godly be mighty on earth? They have the blessing of God, they shall be blessed; the blessing of God will be in the house of the godly, Proverbs 10:22, therefore the father will be blessed, the son and the son's son. The children must have enough, even if they do not have a penny, even if there is not money and goods in store every hour, it must still come in its time; and if the whole world is already suffering from hunger, they must be full. For it is written in another place, in the 37th Psalm, v. 19: "In the time of trouble they will have enough. Item, there, v. 25, David speaks further: "I have been young and have grown old, and have never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed going after bread"; it does not have to come to that, that his seed has lack.

(22) Now consider and calculate for yourself which of the two you would prefer to have, a house full of money, a large treasury, and in addition a restless miser's heart, which could not use its treasury, but always strives for more goods, gathers and picks in heaps, and could not be happy, or, would you rather have nothing at all in the treasury?

How would you like to have a good life, and at the same time a cheerful, calm heart that relies on God, would be sure that God would be his, and would give him enough that he would have no doubt about it? Yes, if one should also answer according to reason, then reason would say: I would rather have nothing, and yet be certain of food every day, because 1) that I should have a hans full of guilders, and at the same time not have a happy and calm hour.

(23) Thus the miserly are minded; they have no need of their goods. If a man has ten thousand guilders, he says, "I must keep them for my son; where will I get them to eat? That is a poor man, must not use it." But a Christian does not paw at himself in this way, he has laid up his treasure in heaven in the treasury of God [Matth. 6, 19. ff. Luc. 12, 34.] and says: Dear Lord, I know that you have even more, you have much more than you can ever give, I will not lack in you; for if it were necessary, the heavens would still have to rain guilders; be you my chest, cellar and basement, in you I have all treasures; if I have you, I have enough. These are true Christians.

24 But where are they? They are sown very thinly. The tares grow enough, but they are cut off; but the generation of those who fear God must rise, will come up, will be blessed, and must have enough. We have many examples of this, as in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the patriarchs, in Moses. They became great men; so also Gideon and his like. David was a bad man, and became a king. The prophets Helias and Heliseus were bad citizens, they became great men, that they ruled kings and princes; and yet they were poor, went astray in the world, and yet had enough. So was Paul, who had no house of his own, had nothing, and yet said, "We have all things" [2 Cor. 6:10], could be poor and rich [Phil. 4:12], he gave to everyone; with the word he fed the soul, and when it was necessary, he also gave the bodily bread. Thus God has always exalted those who fear him and delight in his commandments; but theirs are

very little. This is the first fruit given to those who fear God. To the second he speaks:

V. 3. riches and abundance will be in his house.

25 Here you say: How are they rich, when Paul, Helias and Heliseus were poor? David was driven out of his kingdom by his own son [2 Sam. 15:14], and other saints have lived in great poverty? Answer: They have placed their treasury, chest and cellar with God, in such a place that no thief can steal; they know that they have enough in God. And even if they do not have it in such a way that the bag breaks, 3) and boxes are full, they are sure that God will feed them; and even if they suffer a shortage for a while, and God tempts them, God does not remain outside, must have food, and should heaven rain bread.

026 Helishaeus was once to feed an hundred men, 2 Kings 4:43, 44, and had no more than twenty barley loaves; and the servant murmured, saying, What shall I give an hundred men of this? And Helisee said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. For thus saith the LORD, They shall eat, and be left over. And he set it before them, and they did eat, and there remained more." Item, in the same place, v. 1-7, is written about a woman who complained to Helisee how her husband had died, and the debtor wanted to take away her children because of the debt. She answered: a jug of oil. He said, "Go outside and ask all your neighbors for empty jars, and not a few of them. And go in, and shut the door behind thee with thy sons, and pour into all the vessels, and when thou hast falleth them, give them. So she did, and poured into the vessels. When they were full, she said to her son, "Give me another vessel. And he said unto her, There is no more vessel here. And there was the oil. She told the man of God, and he said, "Sell the oil, pay your debtor, and feed on the other with your sons. The

1) In the original , when.

2) Erlanger: "the".

3) Breaks - bulge, full, be thick.

closed easily. If only we could believe, there would be no lack. Our Lord God is a good goldsmith, he can forge more than a hundred thousand florins from one florin; it does not depend on the amount of money. A man with a thousand florins cannot get as far with an unbelieving heart as a man who trusts in God with one florin. Item, in the same book of the kings [Cap. 4, 38. ff.] stands also such a beautiful example. The prophet commanded his son to boil a great pot of vegetables; he gathered herbs in the field, which were bitter; and when they had boiled them, and eaten them, they cried unto Heliseo, O man of God, death in the pot; for they could not eat it. He said, Bring flour; he had no other apothecary to make it sweet. When the flour came in, it tasted good; it was a small addition, but by the prophet's faith it almost helped.

27 Therefore the verse is true: If they have nothing, they must have enough. The text cannot lie. They also miss it. It must come to them by miraculous signs or be brought to them by other people. So Christ also says in the Gospel, Matth. 6, 33: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. As if he wanted to say: "You must not seek other things, they will be brought to you, they will come to you; but fear me, have awe of me. If this does not help, nothing else will. Follow on:

And his righteousness endures forever.

028 Then he put in a spiritual treasure, saying, His righteousness shall be for ever. He separates this righteousness from the fleshly righteousness. For there are two kinds of righteousness. The first is a worldly righteousness; it is only a hypocrisy, valid only before men, as if one keeps the Emperor's commandment, the Saxon seal and other books of law, yes, also the divine law, according to the rote larva. So if one does not do wrong by heart before the people, justice does not last longer than the body, dies with the man.

29. but the righteous justice, since

of which he speaks here, does not cease, endures forever; for it is valid in the sight of God, who has no end, is blessed here, blessed there. This is what Paul is talking about, and I am led to believe that he is looking here at this verse, where he says 1 Tim. 4:8: "Godliness is useful for all things, and has the promise of this life and the life to come." As if he wanted to say: Godliness is useful for all things; it gives honor and good, there is wealth, security, joy and courage enough here and there. But we only look at the full pockets and bags; but if we believed, we would not see whether we had it in the box or in the fist, it is enough that we believe it in the heart and have it in God. It is the same for the pious, they have it in the bag or not. If he has it in his storehouse, he gives thanks to God and sees to it that he invests and spends it properly; but if God does not want to give it to him in his storehouse, he is still happy. Furthermore, the Psalm says:

V. 4: The light rises in the darkness for the upright.

(30) This is the third piece, namely, of lust. The light, he says, dawns, not on the hypocrites, but on the sincere. The righteous have riches, they have honor, thirdly, they also have pleasure, which is why they greet God earlier. The youth, even if it is pious, still wants to have lust and courage. Now, if they want to have it right, without harm, they should ask God beforehand and say: Dear Lord, give me pleasure and joy; it is not mine, I will not have it without your will. If thou wilt give it me, I will have it; if thou wilt not, let it remain. So if we ask God for it before, we must have it; he will gladly give it to us. Now if someone wants to eat a good meal, seeking pleasure and joy, and does not offer God a good morning because of it, God shall confuse his heart so that no morsel will not taste good to him. Another, who has God before his eyes, even though he does not have a delicious meal, it shall taste better to him than to the richest of all. Therefore, let us only look upon him with fear, and so form him before our eyes, and he will give us enough. But if we want to throw the fear of God to the wind, nothing shall be allowed for us.

and we would have a hundred thousand guilders worth.

But the righteous shall have joy and gladness, as he saith here, though they be in the midst of darkness; and in their affliction and in their displeasure shall the sun rise. For God knows the art that His own must have pleasure in the midst of unpleasure, in affliction, comfort and joy. So it happened to Heliseo. Since it was expensive in the country, the king blamed the prophet, the word of God had to be the cause of it; as it happens with us, when there is a misfortune, the gospel has to do it. Then the king swore that he would have the prophet's head cut off. When the prophet was in the midst of danger at home, with his elders, the king sent his servant to the helisaeo before him. The prophet did not let himself be challenged, he said to his companions: The servant of the murderer comes and wants to cut off my head. Then the king came, and the prophet said, Tomorrow a bushel shall be worth three pennies. Then answered a knight, and said, If the LORD made windows in heaven, how could this be done? And the prophet said, Behold, with thine eyes shalt thou see it, and shalt not eat thereof. It happened. In the morning they gave a bushel for three pennies, and the knight saw it, and he was trodden down by the people [2 Kings 6:31, ff. 7:1].

This prophet was in the midst of danger, a great tempest came upon him, the king raged and raged, was mad and foolish about the word of God, and therefore wanted to slay him; then the sun rose for the prophet in the midst of darkness. The king could not harm him, he was safe in danger. This is what happens to all Christians. So also now, the emperor and his princes are sitting in a chamber, discussing about the gospel, how they want to suppress it; they are wise and angry, let God sit above, do not think about him, do not even ask him for advice. So God watches them, laughs at them, and says: "Dear princes, shall I not also know what you are dealing with, what you are proposing? You do not ask my advice about it; see to it that you do it well [Ps. 2:4, Isa. 7:7]. The good people do not think that God knows their plot, they think that it is good.

Calakutten or into the land of the Moors, hold any collatie with the Moors; he does not take care of our thing. So when they counsel long, he takes away their heart, and so nothing comes of their counsel, and they can do nothing against us [Isa. 40:13, Ps. 76:13P The prophet Helisee knew that the king could not lift a finger against him without God's will.

(33) This is the comfort of the righteous, that in poverty they are rich, in shame they have honor, and in the midst of unpleasure they have joy and gladness. These three things the world seeks. But the prophet teaches 1) how we should use them rightly. St. Paul puts all this together in one sentence, and this is the gloss and the whole summa of this psalm, as he says 1 Tim. 4:8: "Godliness is useful for all things," as said above [§ 29].

So you have four verses in which the Holy Spirit teaches us how to become rich, glorious and mighty, and thirdly, to have good days, joy and gladness. The world also seeks these three things, but in a wrong way; not with God, therefore it does not find them. But Christians do not seek them elsewhere, but only in God, where they find them abundantly and constantly. This is the opinion of the fourth verse.

(35) "To the upright there ariseth light in the midst of darkness. That is, they must have light, even though they are already in the midst of darkness. This cannot be understood according to the world; for the world cannot understand it, nor can it be guided by it, that there should be pleasure when things are evil. Therefore there is nothing but darkness in the world; such light does not dawn on it in adversity.

(36) "In the darkness" is a Hebrew way of speaking. "Darkness" means affliction, trouble, when things are not going well; as also a German proverb is, when misfortune comes, to say, There is great weather. And when the misfortune has passed, one says: The weather is over. Thus the Jews speak, it is dark, if it does not go well. And again, when it goes well, when there is pleasure and joy, they call it "light"; because it also goes naturally thus

1) In the original: lernet.

that we may be more bold and courageous by day than in darkness and by night. There is no man so bold that is not afraid in the darkness, especially when he is alone; there is no heart, he is despondent; but in the light, in the sun, he is courageous. So when it is dark and the weather is cloudy, a man is sadder than when the weather is fine, or when the sun is shining. All this comes, he says.

From your gracious, merciful and just.

(37) "The light," this pleasure and joy, riches, power and honor, he has from him who is gracious, merciful and just to him; so he knows that his heart is well pleased with him who is gracious, merciful and just; he has no doubt about it, he is sure of it. The hypocrites and the wicked also call God gracious, merciful and just, but they do not understand it; they read it, sing it and preach it, but there is a great difference. It is much different to preach, sing and say that God is gracious, merciful and just, than to feel in one's heart a gracious, merciful and just God. The pious and righteous have it not only in the tongue, but in the heart; the tongue and the heart must agree, and then it will be right. But if it is in the mouth alone, and the heart is a hundred thousand miles away, it is in vain. The Christians feel it and experience it in their hearts that such things do not fall by the wayside or come from men, but feel 1) such things in their hearts, are certain and do not doubt.

(38) He who feels these things in his heart must have enough, and light comes to him in the midst of darkness; and when the darkness passes away, he must also be rich and rise high, though he be poor and oppressed. For he has him who is merciful and gracious. If then he has him who has all things, who is a fountain and a well of all things, what can he lack? As God Himself boasts Jer. 23, 24: "I fill heaven and earth", that is, heaven and earth are full of Me. Is. 66, 1.: "Heaven is my chair, and the earth my footstool"; so

1) In the original: "fühlet"; the two following verba are also in the singular.

I am great, and have thighs so long that I sit in heaven, and stretch out my feet on the earth, and still reach far beyond heaven; that is, I am everywhere, I fill heaven and earth with me, and am not comprehended by the whole world, I reach far beyond the world.

39. if therefore one has him who thus fills all things, he has more than the whole world has [Ps. 73:25.] For he has the right spring, not a spoonful, as the world is against that spring. If God gives the same amount, a kingdom, Persian land, papacy, emperorship, it is only a backbite, 2) a morsel of bread, a spoonful, a mouthful; is not yet the right source, but only a piece that he gives to all, which he throws into the rapuse. But if he has the one who has more than he can forgive (as is a common saying), he has such a heart that he knows he has a gracious God, and all things in him. What should such a heart always lack?

40 The prophet gives three titles to God for the sake of the three pieces he has given him, as stated above 37 ff]. is said, gracious, merciful and just. "Gracious" he is, for he forgives that we have sinned. "Merciful," that he spares the rest that we still live, and supplies us where we still lack. Third, he is "just," that what we do must be well done. This means gracious, merciful and just. So our case is that we are conceived and born in sins; hence it belongs that he is gracious. Then I say, Depart, sin, thou shalt not hurt me. And that I shall live yet is not altogether good; that the merciful GOD will credit me with. He is also just, for everything I do must be good and right, even though it is not as perfect as it should be.

41. When the heart is thus established toward God, knowing that it has this in God, what can it lack? He knows that God is pleased with him, will not remember what is past, will also spare what is to come, and what he does, whether good or not, must be righteous and valid before Him. There then is

2) That is, a small snack.

our title is that we conceive and are born sinners; so I must be the dear child, must be in the bosom of the Father; I shall lack nothing, must have enough here and there. And even if there were a misfortune, and he wanted to show me the rod, it should only be a fox's tail, he will not mean it seriously [Isa. 54, 7. 8. Habak. 3, 2. Ps. 78, 39.] All this, as you have heard, is said by him that we should know how to keep ourselves before God. Now he also goes forth and teaches how we should live before our neighbor, and tells the fruits of the righteous, so that they may also be known before men, and says:

V. 5: A pious man is merciful and glad to lend.

The righteous and pious man is also merciful, like his God; he gladly lends, gladly gives, gladly helps his neighbor. But who is he? Where can one find such a one? You have heard above [16] that before God no one is pious and righteous, he is as holy as he always wants to be, but only by faith, that he trusts God, and believes that his sins are forgiven, and that he has a gracious God who credits him with everything. The others at all, who do not trust in God, are hypocrites and peelers in their skin, and there is nothing good in them, even though they pretend it deliciously, and lead a good appearance, and present themselves as the most pious people.

43. but a righteous man, who fears God, and has awe in the eyes of God, so paints God for him, as he sees all his words, works and thoughts [FPs. 139, 1. ff]. He, in turn, is also gracious and merciful to his neighbor, as God has been gracious and merciful to him [Luc. 6, 35.]. By what, then, is he merciful? By doing to his neighbor as God has done to him; just as God has given him his sin, so he gives and forgives everything that his neighbor has against him. This is easy for me now, when I look into the springs, into the wells, from which so much has flowed to me. When I know and feel in my heart what God has given me and credited to me, then I am willing to credit my neighbor also and to give what he has against me.

I do not remember how great a sin he has committed against me, and I do not measure it out to him as from a table; I give it to him freely from my heart, and I think, "If God has given you so much sin and so great a sin, and has given you credit for it, what is it that your neighbor has done against you? It is nowhere equal to it [Matth. 18, 33]. For one sin done against God is greater than all the world sins against one man.

For sin must be measured, not according to itself, not according to its greatness, but according to Him who has been injured and reviled by sin. Now God is immeasurably greater than all men. If I feel what God has done to me, I will gladly do it again to my neighbor; but if I do not feel it, I will not do it to my neighbor.

45 If I do not want to confess my sin before God, if I do not want to consider it sin, but want to defend it as good, like the Pharisee in Luke [Cap. 18, 11. 12.], if I do not want them to be punished for sin, but consider it a good work, there is no hope that God will forgive me. For if he is to forgive me, I must feel it in my heart beforehand, and consider it sin, and complain to him of my distress, and come before him as one who is sick; there is then a confidence that he will credit me with it.

46 So also, if my neighbor does not want to recognize his sin, but still defends it and believes it to be good, as now and our red spirits do not want to confess their error, want to be right; if one wants to punish them for it, they do not want to suffer it: one cannot forgive them either. They must be let go when they are admonished once or twice and reminded of their error [Matth. 15, 14. Tit. 3, 10.]. But those who recognize their sin should be merciful to them, having compassion for them inwardly in their hearts and also outwardly. Just as God has helped us inwardly to wealth, honor and goods, pleasure and joy, so I should help my neighbor with goods, save him from his sorrow, protect his honor, defend him when he is treated badly, and the like.

(47) The temporal goods are in three Christian customs, and over the three there is a secular custom. The first Christian custom is, if I let myself take the goods, let myself be deceived, fooled and faked. If a rogue comes and steals or robs me of what is mine, or deceives me with good, sweet words, and deceives me, he has done me bad harm, has only taken away the crusts from my bread, but has not yet taken away the one who sits on top. He does more harm to himself than to me; he takes away the crusts from me, a badly plated loaf, and makes himself an ungracious and angry God, and I still keep him who is in heaven, who has all things, since I have my right treasure, which no thief can steal.

The other custom is to give and give to the one who asks [Proverbs 3:27]. But one should give in such a way that one does not give away other people's goods. For one should not steal and then give it to other people.

The third custom is that if I lend what is mine and do not ask for it back, it will come back or not. But how mean these three pieces are, one is well aware; they are unknown to the world, few people know about them.

(50) Above the three customs there is another worldly custom, as selling and buying, giving one for another; this belongs to the lawyers. But the prophet speaks here of lending, the least custom of the Christians, which is felt least of all among the Christians.

51 Now this is what the prophet says about the Jewish people. For he saw how it was among them that they were more stingy than other nations; as it commonly happens where the gospel is preached, that they are much more angry than if the gospel had not been preached there [2 Cor. 4:4]. This is because where God is with His word, the devil is angry and cannot bear it, and his kingdom is diminished. But where he is alone, where the word of God does not go, he can well be pious, does not need his treachery so much, pretends and adorns himself so finely that one might well take him for the Holy Spirit. He lets his people do many good works, pray, fast, build churches,

He pretends that he is completely holy and pious. But when the word of God comes to light again, and he is betrayed and stripped, he rages and is mad and foolish, cannot stand it, becomes angry, and also awakens his members [Luc. 11, 26]. Those who were pious before, he stirs up with all kinds of sins, with avarice, envy, hatred, wrath, heresies, and of the ulcer without number; is thus awakened and where the word of God goes in the swing, there he stirs up the most.

52 Thus it came to pass among this people, which had the word of God, the law, and the prophets, that the devil was busy, and made greater idolatry than among the heathen. For where the Gentiles had an idol, the Jews had theirs in abundance, and there was no village or town; they had an idol in it [Jer. 2:5 ff]. For they provided for the belly.

(53) Therefore the prophet takes the least custom of the three, and would gladly have them lend one to another. For there was great avarice and usury among them; whoever could overshadow the other and deceive him with lies had won. This is what the devil does when you ask him for his kingdom with the word of God. Thus Christ speaks in the Gospel of Luke, Cap. II, 21. 22.: If a strong man (that is the devil) has his court in his hands, and is kept safe, all things are well. But when the word of God comes, which is stronger than he, he rumbles, and all things go up. When the word is gone, then it is still, then he can finely lead his own, as we have seen under the Pabst's kingdom. He let them sit finely with peace, because there was no one to wake him up. But when the light of the gospel went out, behold how he stood, how he lived; he moved his hands and feet, as in the gospel [Marc. 9, 17. ff.], when Christ wanted to cast the devil out of the possessed man, he tore, raged and raged, foamed, stood up horribly, and did not like to be cast out. As in our times, when one wants to cast him out through the gospel, he resists on all sides, stirs up, awakens sects and raving spirits; item, makes people angry, stingy, envious, hateful.

and carefully for the belly. Since one could give a hundred thousand florins to the monks and priests before, even to the devil himself, one can hardly give a florin now; if one could take it from them now, one would. The gospel teaches that one should give; the devil teaches that one should only take. Where does it come from? It is not flesh and blood alone; it is the living devil that has been awakened; he worries that he must come out of his nest, he knows well what it means to him.

54 And now this is a great sign that the doctrine is righteous. For if it were not just, he would leave us well satisfied. But it is a proverb, and even the papists have used it: The saints must have much contestation. Before, when the works were going on, he left his saints in peace and let them go; but now, when the word goes forth, it will not go, it has no power in all, for he hinders it. But he cannot hinder it; it must continue in those who accept the word; there it bears fruit, which never fails. The prophet continues:

He is quite correct in his words.

It is a Hebrew speech. We are not yet proficient in the Hebrew language; it has not been pure since the time of Christ, therefore it must always be tinkered with. Since the Jews were led to Babylon, their country was destroyed; where now a country is devastated and destroyed, there also the order of a country disintegrates; from it follows also that the language perishes. Thus it happened to Greece and the Greek language; thus to the Latin language; thus it would also happen to the German language, if the country should be devastated. So also the Hebrew language has fallen away, therefore one must have great work with this language.

56 Now the word *dabar*, which the prophet uses here, means a word, a thing, or a thing; therefore it may be interpreted in two ways: First, "he doth rightly divide his words. Secondly, "he gets right into the matter, deals with the matter in the right way. I almost wanted to hang there that *Dabar* was called a thing.

57 First, the prophet says that he gladly gives what is his and that God has given him.

He needs his neighbor for what he has. On the other hand, he acts uprightly and honestly, cheats no one, hurts no one, does what is right, offends no one, but is good to all at the same time; he works hard so that his cause is righteous. It is not good for me to steal from my neighbor and give it to God; as God Himself says in Isaiah 61, v. 8: "I, the Lord, love justice, and am hostile to the sacrifice of robbery." It is also a proverb that one should not uncover one altar and close another. It does not rhyme that one would rob and steal, and then give a penny or three for the sake of God; as is the custom nowadays, to steal secretly with false weights and measures, to be stingy and to scrounge; as also the craftsmen who cannot give their goods at a high enough price. The peasants have also learned this; if someone has only two eggs or two pieces of wood, he makes such a mess of it that no one can get along with him. And therein lies the whole world. There you see how people scrape to themselves, so that they bring it all together in one heap; then they want to speak: Oh God, I am a great sinner, I have been stingy, I want to do this, I want to do that; so then give some party for God's sake, and it shall be done. But God calls it a robbery sacrifice. Thus says Christ Matthew 5:23, 24: "If thou bring a sacrifice, and there think that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave thy gift there before the altar, and go first, and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." As if he wanted to speak: I do not want your sacrifice, which you offer to the detriment of your neighbor. If thou wilt sacrifice, give that thou hast with a good conscience. But where are they? This is the first mind, since *Dabar* is called a thing.

58 Secondly, *Dabar* is a word that I have translated here: "He divides his words rightly"; that is, he does not speak too near or too far, he looks at no one, he despises no one, he is free in speech, he does not look at the rich to speak for his sake, nor at the poor to despise him. This is a beautiful virtue, you can see how it is.

the devil attacks them and takes us captive. We are free to punish; if the person is small, and we despise him, there is so much talk and reproach that there is no end to it, then I shower him with whole loads of reproaches; but if the person is great, a lord and mighty, or my friend, has to worry about an offense or harm, fearing he would be angry, then I whittle the words thin, make it milder, can well read with a feather and with the truth under the bench. But of the righteous man it is written in the 15th Psalm, v. 4: "The unrighteous are despised before him, but he honors those who fear the Lord"; for he does not look at the person. If he sees someone in need of punishment, he punishes him, whether he is great or small; he does not look at whether he is a ruler, master or servant; he shuts his eyes, looks neither at sister nor brother, neither at friendship nor authority; he looks only at him who is in heaven. Therefore he does not care if the devil is angry. If he is angry, he will become angry again; if he does not want to laugh again, he will be angry forever. He goes through, he does not pretend, so he despises no one. A great and strong faith is needed for one to be free in speech, so that he does not fear that the sack of maggots and the basket of bread will be harmed; faith must be courageous for such upright words. These are the two meanings of the word Dabar, namely, that the righteous may be right in words and right in works. Follow on:

V. 6. for he will remain forever.

He knows this well, that is why he relies on it. He looks at this life like a vapor of smoke; today we are healthy, tomorrow we die [Ps. 90, 3. ff.] God has thus ordered our life that we are not safe for a moment, and the uncertain moment we invest so shamefully; what would happen if the bad guys were safe for twenty or thirty years? There they would go through, and think: 1) I want to live a year or eighteen in the hustle and bustle, and after that I will mend my ways. But we are uncertain, and

1) In the other relation, in the Wittenberg one, this is expressed thus: "I still have more than thirty or forty years to go before I become pious."

Yet we live as shamefully as if we were sure to save piety until we die. The pious man does not do this, he does not put his good in this world; he does not see the perishable life, he sees the eternal, because he will remain forever [Col. 3, 2]. For there he has him who cannot die, who is gracious and merciful to him, who abides forever, on him he relies; and even though he dies, he passes through death into such a life, where he shall abide forever [Jn 11:25, Jn 11:25].

His will never be forgotten.

How does this work? So, if the people forget the righteous, God does not forget him. Look at Abel, who was the first to go; Cain, his brother, beat him to death [Gen. 4:8]. Cain wanted to forget his; but God does not forget his. He lay there, neither moving his hands nor his feet, neither able to speak nor to see; Cain considered him dead; yes, dead! He had only just come to life, and was known throughout the world. Cain could hardly look around when a voice came down from heaven and said: "Where is Habel? Then Cain might well have said: Where does the devil lead you from? I wept, you would have been dead long ago. Then Habel comes to life and is carried into the whole world; and again, his brother Cain finds the whole bet too narrow. For God takes care of Habel as if He were Habel Himself; and as God is everywhere, and fills all things, so must Habel also be made known, and must come forth. Therefore he said to Cain, "Where is Habel?" This was a shameful question. Someone else (like Cain) should tremble, if God wanted to ask him exactly that question [Ps. 130:3]. Should God also inquire of us, where would we stay?

61 Thus it went with Habel. Cain said: He shall die; so God says: He shall live, and if the devil should be sorry; you have brought him from a perishable life into an eternal, imperishable life. This is how it is with all righteous Christians; the world wants to destroy them, so they will come to life. It was the same with Christ, who had to die. Item, John Hus was strangled by the pope, and other pious men more, they must be damned; but God does not forget you, they

must come forth, indeed, the pope himself must proclaim them in the bull on Green Thursday.

(62) So it will be: as the emperor and the lords are ungracious to us, so ours will not be forgotten; they will sing to them a little song, saying: "He will remain forever, and his will not be forgotten. They will not oppress those who preach the word of GOD. GOD will say to them: You will let him remain for me as long as I and my word remain; if I and my word perish, then he also perishes. But you will be well aware of it; I will watch you to see if you can drive me out. The Christianity is often touched, have the word and the Christians want to dampen that they should not speak; but they remain well, they have not been able to bring it there. We see this in the first patriarch Habel, in Christ and in all the martyrs; they have remained and are remembered. So he who trusts in God knows that he will live in God forever.

63. But that we regard it so little is the fault of our belly; but he who fears God knows what it is to live in God. Where could Habel and John Hus have gotten to, that they should be in all places during their lives? But now, when they have died, they must be in all places; on all preaching stands one must blah with him: he must be in my mouth, in your mouth, in all books, in all ears. This is a wonderful thing, that all creatures must know that Habel and John Hus were pious people; the stars must worship them, and those who strangled them must fall at their feet, and yet have no thanks.

V. 7. He is not afraid of evil gossip.

Here the prophet looks into the life of the righteous. First, he sets the fruits and the works he does, is merciful, and lends gladly; then, the words. For he is useful with words, serving everyone with speeches and punishments. On the other hand, he puts the other part of his life, that is, on the left side, the repugnance; one wants to put him down, but he must remain forever, he must not be forgotten. And whether an evil rumor

goes out over him, yet he shall not be afraid of it. He does not say: He shall have no 1) evil cry; yea, he shall have an evil cry, the world shall reproach and esteem him for a bad fellow, for a heretic, and for a seducer. The title shall all Christians have, which Christ carried on the cross, he is hanged between two murderers, he is proclaimed for the very worst scoundrel and knave, as an arch murderer. So his title was: "A king of the Jews" [Luc. 23, 38], that is, he is a disobedient one of the emperor, wants to fall into the emperor's power, he is a rebel, who wants to revolt against the emperor's country, wants to hang the people on him; he had to use the title and had to be called rebellious. Now there is no more wicked man on earth than a rebel. For much blood is shed through rebellion.

So Christ dies as a heretic and a seducer in the midst of two murderers. To the emperor he must be seditious, to the Jews a seducer and heretic. That is a lot to die for. That would still be to suffer, that one would be accused and brought to trial as a heretic and a seditious one, then one could still answer for himself; but to die then, and to take the title with him, that is disgraceful. He had to have it both ways, that he was considered spiritually and physically the greatest evil-doer; spiritually a deceiver and a heretic, physically an inciting one, who corrupted both body and soul. All Christians and pious people must have this title, and if we do not have it, we do not belong to Christ. It is not good for a preacher if he has peace and is not challenged by anyone; it is a sign that he does not have the right doctrine. For the nature of this doctrine is that it must be challenged.

(66) What is the advantage of the righteous who are thus reviled and defiled? They will not be afraid of evil gossip. He lets them shout, wash and talk, he lets Pilate write the title; he knows that it is not true and that they are doing him an injustice. Pilate wrote the title, and knew that they did him wrong. For so it is written in the Gospel, Matt. 27,

1) Instead of "one" in the outputs, we have put "none".

18: "Pilate knew that they had delivered him up out of envy." The righteous man does not care what the world says about him; he takes comfort in the fact that he knows it is a lie and is sure of his teaching and his faith. The only thing to do is to let the world cry out for a year or four, let it rebuke: Heretic, rebel, apostate, seducer and the like, if only it is not true, if only the consciences do not agree. So Paul says in the other epistle to the Corinthians in the sixth chapter, v. 8: "We are held as deceivers, and yet are true" [Matth. 5, 11. 1 Joh. 3, 19. 20.]. It is right that we should be given such titles, that we should be thought to be knaves and deceivers; it is right that we should be snatched up and have our heads cut off; but that the conscience should remain innocent and not be willing to doubt God, that it should be pure and innocent before Him, so that their cries and blasphemies will not stick.

John Hus has lain there a hundred years and more, has had the cry as the most wicked man. Why? He attacked the three crowns. If he had denied God and done other vices, it would not have been so violently attracted as when he attacked this three-crowned man, it would have been easier for him to be forgiven; nevertheless, his song has remained, and one has always murmured how he was wronged. Yes, they also had to confess in the high schools that he was right, and his enemies had to say that he had not been overcome, but that they had used force against him. What harm has it done him that he was burned? He now stands with great honor; God comes now and says: Where is John Hus? He must come forth, he must be holy, and all his enemies must be sorry; and those who strangled him must have the name that they were murderers of him. So the prophet says: "Those who fear God are right in word and deed, but the world must pervert it and make heresy of it; but the righteous is not afraid of such cries, he knows that it is good and just; but the evil worms must defile and defile it. Therefore he further says:

His heart is ready to hope in the Lord.

68) That is, his heart is prepared against all misfortune; whatever adversity may befall him, he does not pay attention to it, but his heart is finely prepared to hope in God, not in honor and goods, power and favor of lords; not in those who may lend and give to him. Nor is he disgraced, 1) if he is in disgrace; for he hopes in him that giveth him a rule, that he may go up: but few will go up. It is a fine art to hope in God, who could, if the whole world defiles him, and he is in disgrace, let it go, let it go one, two, or a hundred years, and think, God knows it well, he will do it well. So he is confident, he is of good cheer, he is not afraid. Why? Hope is in him, he fears neither death nor shame, he knows that God will pull him out, as follows in the Psalm:

V. 8. His heart is confident and does not fear until he sees his delight in his enemies.

(69) Our hearts are too narrow: we cannot grasp God, we cannot understand when He will punish our enemies; we would like to set a goal for Him, but it is far too high and too great for us to know how He will deal with them. Therefore, let us put it in his hands; he knows well how to do it, and he will do it in the best possible way. We do not know how God will avenge, but when he comes and attacks the enemy, we will say: I never meant it that way. It is natural that if we have enemies, we would like to be smelled by them; but when we bring it home to Him, He will do so strangely to my enemies, He will strike them so finely, that I could never have wished it so, nor could I have thought it so.

70 Thus God speaks in another place in the Psalter, Ps. 91:8: "You will see the vengeance of the wicked. Scripture shows us many examples of this. So Habel smelled Cain. Habel died bodily, was strangled by his brother Cain, and lives in

1) entrüchten - to come from rumor, the opposite of berüchten. Missing in Grimm (Dietz).

2) Erlanger: those.

God; he has lost an uncertain life, and has regained a certain one in God. If Cain had known that he had fallen into such a life through death, he would have desired with all his heart that his brother had beaten him to death, so that he would have come out of this miserable life into such a beautiful and delicious life. Again, Cain is so severely punished that he must be disgraced before the whole world, and the wide world becomes too narrow for him.

The same thing happened to John Hus; he was the first to call the pope an antichrist, so we must give him credit. Now he smelled so fine of the pope, if his heart should wish, he could not have wished it so. The pope was held in such high esteem that, if only he complained, the emperor and all princes had to bow down before him and fear him. This tickled him and did him good; but after the death of Hussein, all this was well smelled. For the papacy soon began to go up again, and was torn away one by one, until he [the pope] was greatly despised. What is now lesser and more despised than the papacy, and especially among Christians? And the longer it goes on, the worse it becomes, until nothing more will be thought of it. So John Hus could not have been better smelled by the pope than this, and if he were still alive, he would have left a hundred necks behind, so that he could have brought it to such an end with the pope, and it will probably become even more.

Thus it happens to all who trust and wait on God that they are smelled more strongly than they would have thought, and the vengeance becomes so strong that one can no longer defend oneself. If now the wicked do wrong to the righteous in their bodies, goods, houses and farms, when it is only a party, they cannot be harmed much, and they, the wicked, will be disgraced, and stink before the whole world, and yet must finally stop, and be smelled forever because of it. Therefore let us pray for them beforehand, that they may not thus come into the hand of God. For when they come into his vengeance

he shall not cease [Heb. 10:30], and the saying shall come true [Ps. 91:8], "Thou shalt see the vengeance of the wicked." Further the prophet says:

V. 9: He scatters and gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever; his horn is exalted with honor.

(73) The wicked scrape and snatch to themselves, they cannot be filled, they also take from the poor. Again, the righteous not only suffers harm from the enemy, but is so lenient that he also scatters his goods. For he himself has enough in God, in whom he hopes. He does not regard the other as anything else, but as seed, which he scatters and casts out without distinction; but so that he gives it to the poor and not to the rich, as the wicked do, who also give and give among themselves, but for the sake of retribution, that they may get the more, as Christ rebukes the Pharisees for not inviting the poor to the table. 2c. [Luc. 14:12.]

74 This little word: "He scatters", St. Paul looked closely at the Corinthians [2. Ep. 9, 6. 9.], when he admonishes them with this verse, that they should give milderly, so that there is a blessing. As if he were saying, "Do not clamor and clatter with brightnesses and partisans; if you want to give, give honestly, reach out as if you were going to scatter it. Just as the poor widow did with her two pennies [Luc. 21:2], she scattered them freely. But the rich did not take hold of it in this way, but made merry with what they had left over. It should be said: scatter, reach out, "God loves a cheerful giver" [2 Cor. 9, 7], so God will scatter again, that you all may have abundance for all good works, says St. Paul [Eph. 3, 19].

For he that doeth these things, and bringeth forth the fruits of faith, his righteousness shall be everlasting. For it is a righteousness that pleases God, because no one does this unless he is full of faith. Now therefore let it be that thou shalt be poor, and that temporal goods shall perish: but righteousness, being practiced in temporal goods, abideth for ever. Not so with the wicked, who are righteous in the sight of men, but their righteousness dies with them, and abideth not in the sight of God.

76. for this "his horn is lifted up in honor," that is, he will not only be righteous forever, but will also be praised and honored forever. For though he be persecuted and condemned, blasphemed and ravished and oppressed for a time, yet at the last he must arise, and lift up his head, and lift up his horn, that he may have a glorious shout for ever. Behold all the prophets, apostles, and saints, who in their day were nothing, and were despised of great men; but now they also celebrate and honor all kings, and their horn is in everlasting honor, more than any king or lord on earth. What "horn" means in Scripture is otherwise said enough. It is a strong, glorious power or dominion, but not bodily in this place, but spiritual. For as I said, St. Paul, Peter, Titus 2c. are now more glorious and in greater honor and power than all kings on earth.

(77) These are two great things that become the reward of the righteous. First, that they are certain to remain righteous before God and man forever, no matter how highly they are condemned. Secondly, that because of such righteousness they will be more glorious than any king on earth. What king would not give ten of his crowns to be like Paul, Titus, Ananias, 2c., who in their lives were a shabbat and the refuse of the world, and not their honor but their shame was high?

(78) But again, as the righteousness of the wicked perisheth with them, so shall their temporal glory fall to the ground from the righteousness that now soars on high, and shall be turned to ashes. Therefore the Psalm further says:

V. 10 The wicked shall see it, and it shall grieve him; he shall gnash his teeth together, and perish. For the desire of the wicked will be lost.

70 That is, such justice and honor of the righteous, the wicked would like to dampen, but he can not. That is why he does not succeed, because he has to see it like this, and he is annoyed, grits his teeth, and still has to let it go, and he himself perishes.

For there is the verdict: "The lust of the wicked is lost", that is what they want, that does not have to be. And there is not the least torture, that they must not do what they cannot let, want to curb it and must let it remain.

80) See the examples when Paul and his like, all the saints, were destroyed, what happened? After their death, people said and sang about them, praising their righteousness with great honor until this very hour. The tyrants were annoyed, but what good did it do? The more it annoyed them, the more it went on, until they themselves perished, and yet the saints remained in high honor.

(81) So it is with our tyrants, and so it will be with them; for they oppress, and press hard upon them that have the gospel. O woe, press hard, dear sirs, and press confidently; what you will, that will be done. Yes, behind you, as the cancer goes. Your nobility together with you shall perish, and those whom you have killed shall come forth with honor. And if ye be destroyed, and become mad and foolish, they shall hereafter honor and praise you as the righteous and holy for ever; and they shall mock and laugh at you as fools and wicked. Just as we see that John Hus is now blowing his horn with honor, even though the papists are angry about it and grit their teeth. But they are allowed to be angry and annoyed, but nothing is done about it. They must see it, and may not resist it; they must hear it, and may not suffer it. This is the beginning of the vengeance of God upon the wicked, that their desire must be nothing, and that they must see all that vexeth them in the righteous.

So we see how in this psalm we are not only taught finely to be pious, but are also abundantly comforted and provoked to remain in righteousness, and to bear the misfortunes of our enemies with confident patience, certain that we will be smelled all too well, and will see all too much pleasure in our enemies, that they will have to grit their teeth, and yet will not be able to do more. May God's grace help us to live and experience such things. Amen.

28. interpretation of the 117th Psalm. *)

Anno 1530.

To the strict and honorable Hans von Sternberg, knight, my favorable lord and friend.

Grace and peace in Christ our Lord. Exalted, honorable, favorable Lord and friend! I recently sent out a booklet on the 117th Psalm. But because it had become so large in a hurry and unexpectedly, and had gone out with a low reputation, bare and naked, I have again put it into the furnace and improved it (though not much), so that it might become more pleasant and produce more fruit with a little more clothing. For the holy scripture is worthy to be honored and adorned abundantly and to the best of one's ability, so that it might find lovers; for it has enough enemies and persecutors without that.

(2) But I have spread it under your name, not only so that it would have more prestige with some who despise all art and learning, but also so that it would be a testimony that there are still some much finer people among the nobility.

3. for now almost the majority of the nobility are so blasphemous and disgraceful that they are doing evil to the common man.

Blood and evil delusion make, as if the whole nobility through and through is no good. And yet such delusions are common among the populace, and it is not good that those who are to rule in the world should be so lowly and lightly esteemed. Some day another evil might ensue, where the devil would find space and time, as he did under Muenzer in the riot.

4 We still have before our eyes the example of the clergy, who also sat so securely and lived so shamefully that the whole world had to despise them. Yet they thought it impossible that they should come under such contempt and fall. Nevertheless, it has happened, and it is to be feared that they will never again bring themselves out to the honors they had. The nobility is now trying to follow this example, and I am worried that they will succeed in inheriting the happiness of the clergy, if it remains otherwise. For God does not deny, who says [2 Sam. 2, 30.]: "He who despises me, shall be despised again." Yes, they think, because it is thus consumed, it has no need, both defy and insist on God and man, despise God's word, discipline and honor. But just as God has come behind the clergy unawares, so too

*On August 3, 1530, Luther wrote from Coburg to Justus Jonas that he had the 117th Psalm under his hands (De Wette, Vol. IV, p. 121). He had the interpretation printed at Coburg without a note. It appeared under the title: "Der Hundert vnd siebenzehende Psalm. Ausgelegt durch D. Mart. Luther. In the M.D.MX. Jar." To: end: "Gedrucket zu Cobm gk durch Haus Beern. ym 1530 Jar." Still on the Coburg, Luther has this writing, as he says in the dedication to the knight Hans von Sternberg, "pushed by new into the Esse, and (although not much improved", there also the dedication added, which is dated from August 27, 1530. Only on September 8 did he send the "whole" interpretation to his wife in Wittenberg (De Wette, Vol. VI, p. 122) with instructions to have it printed by Georg Rauff-Rhaw). This edition appeared under the same title as the one published in Coburg. At the end: "Gedruckt zu Wittemberg durch Georgen Rhaw." From the letter just mentioned, it seems to us that Luther first intended to have this psalm printed by Hans Weiss, but that the latter did not want to print it. The whole passage reads: "I am surprised why Hans Weiß did not accept the Psalm. I would not have thought that he would be so disgusted, it is a delicious copy. Send it here in its entirety, and grant it to Georgen Nau (Rawen) Wohl." There can hardly be any doubt that here, with respect to both printers, only one and the same psalm is being spoken of. The Psalm, however, of which Luther speaks here, is our writing, as also Seidemann (De Wette, vol. VI, p. 122, note) acknowledges. In the same year, a reprint was published by Andreas Rauscher in Erfurt. In 1721 and 1726, Rambach reprinted this interpretation tckffeU under the title: Geistreiche Auslegung des hundert und siebenzehnten Psalms als ein Meisterstück einer gründliMuOMäruyg, sammt dessen Gedanken vom Reich Christi über Micha 5, 1. In the collections: in the Wittenberg (IvWfi Bd. III, Bl. 542 d; in the Jena (1566), Bd.V, Bl. 123 d; in the Altenburger, Bd. V, p. 250, in the LeipzigÄ, Bd. VI, p. 489 and in the Erlanger, Bd. 40, p. 280. The attribution is also found in De Wette, Bd. IV, p. -We give the text just as Walch after the first Wittenberg single edition, comparing the WittchrhUger and dksr Jenaer collection, as well as the Erlanger. - The difference between the Coburg and Wittenberg editions is limited to the fact that in the latter five sections, some shorter, some longer, have been added. We have indicated these in notes.

he will truly get behind the nobility as well. He is man enough for them; he will also give them enough pawing and throbbing that they will scatter like ashes before the wind.

If they wanted to be held in honor and feared, they would first have to hold God in honor and fear him, so that they would have a good, virtuous cry among the people. Otherwise, where one wants it with vain flaunting, throbbing, proud, defiant, and besides despise virtue and honor, that will soon make peasants out of the nobility. For they are also true peasants, without going under the nobility's pen and name, as long as they can last. God is a master of humbling the proud and making the despisers despised, and does not suffer them.

(6) In order that such evil delusions do not become too strong, it is necessary to praise and extol some of the nobility who are worthy of it. For God always sees to it that there are some who are pious and upright in the estate that He Himself has established, however few there may be, so that His creation and order may not be in vain, even if there is only one lot in Sodoma. And which state is so good on earth, since several parts are not evil inside? And if one looks at them alone, one must be under the illusion that the state is of no use; and if one already shows some pious people, it is still annoying that one should tolerate so many evil and harmful ones for the sake of the few good ones.

Therefore, because God the Father in heaven has gifted you with right earnestness and love for His holy word and all virtue, I have not refrained from praising and extolling such grace of God in you (for it is God's grace and not your ability), whether some of the naughty, desolate nobility might want to be moved to such examples, and also strive to keep themselves noble and not so rude and wicked. They are guilty, because they want to be the highest in the world, that they give honest, virtuous examples to the lowest; God demands it of them. Again, He will also repay them for the evil that has come out of their angry, shameful nature.

8. but I do not create such with this,

Well then, I will help to control the harmful delusion that neither the nobility nor any other estate is thoroughly useless, but God keeps his part under it, and his interest penny or booty penny.

(9) But I hope that such and such a booklet will please you, and that your heart will find in it a better, more blessed pilgrimage than the one you made in Jerusalem. Not that I despise such pilgrimage, for I would like to make such a journey myself, and now that I can no longer do so, I still like to hear and read about it; as I also listened to you so gladly and diligently the other day; but that we have not done such pilgrimage in a fine way; just as it happened to me in Rome, when I was also such a mad saint, running through all the churches and gaps, believing everything that is false and forged there. I also said one or ten masses in Rome, and at that time I was almost sorry that my father and mother were still alive, because I would have gladly delivered them from purgatory with my masses and other more excellent works and prayers. There is a saying in Rome: "Blessed is the mother whose son says mass on Saturday at St. John's. How gladly I would have made my mother blessed! But it was too urgent, and could not come and ate a sprightly herring for it.

(10) Well, so we have done, we did not know any better, and the Roman See did not punish such unswung lies. But now, praise God, we have the Gospels, Psalms and other holy Scriptures, wherein we may walk with profit and blessedness, and behold and visit the right promised land, the right Jerusalem, yea, the right paradise and kingdom of heaven, and walk not through the graves and bodily places of the saints, but through their hearts, minds and spirits. I hereby command you and yours to God. And forgive me my gossip; for it is a joy for me to see and hear pious nobility, because the other's gossip is so much and great. God help us all, amen! From the desert, on Saturday after Bartholomew [August 27] 1530.

Your willing

Martinus Luther.

The 117th Psalm.

Praise the Lord, all nations; praise him, all peoples.

For his goodness and faithfulness are over us forever, alleluia.

(1) This is a short and easy psalm, made, no doubt, so that every man may be the more diligent to mark it, and the more careful to remember what he says, that no one may complain of the length or quantity, much less of the sharpness, height, or depth of the words. For they are short, fine, bright, common words that anyone can understand if he will only pay attention to them and think about them.

(2) For all the words of God want the same, so that one does not run over them and think that one has understood them purely on the basis of reason. As the frivolous, satiated, weary spirits do, when they have once heard a word of God, [it] must be an old thing, and gape at something new, as if they knew everything and everything that they have heard. This is a dangerous plague and a wicked, secret trick of the devil, who has made people fearless, safe, and bold, and has sent and prepared them for all kinds of error and deceit, and is actually the vice called *acedia*, slothfulness in the service of God. Against this St. Paul teaches, Rom. 12, 11, that one should be ardent in spirit. And Revelation 3:15, 16, the Spirit says of such, "Oh that thou wert cold or hot; but because thou art lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

3 For it is also true that such half-learned people are the most useless people on earth, and it would be much better for them if they could do nothing at all. For they disobey no one, can do everything themselves better than all the world, know how to judge all art and scripture; and all in all, they can teach no one anything righteous, nor do they allow themselves to be taught by anyone. They have eaten the school bag, which suffers no master, and yet they have no light in it, so that they can teach others rightly.

4. such unholy people have the devil

Nowadays, there is a particularly large number of such people, since no Sudeler is unable to hear a sermon or read a chapter in German, so he makes himself a doctor and crowns his donkey, persuading himself that he can now do everything better than all those who teach him. Those who can bridle the horse by the tail are called masters. All this (I say) comes from reading or hearing God's word so lightly, and not heeding it with fear, humility and diligence.

5. I have often felt such devils and temptations in myself, and even today I can hardly sufficiently guard against them and bless them; I freely confess this as an example to whom it pleases, since I am now almost an old doctor and preacher, and certainly know, or should know, as much in the Scriptures as all such clever people know, but I still have to become a child, and every day early in the morning I count orally to myself the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the faith, and what I want to have for dear Psalms and Proverbs, all things as children are now taught and accustomed; Although I must otherwise deal daily with the Scriptures, and stand in battle with the devil, nor may I say in my heart, the Lord's Prayer is old, you know the Ten Commandments, you know the faith well 2c., but learn daily from it, and remain a student of the Catechism, feel also that it helps me noticeably, and find with experience that God's word is not to be learned, but is actually true that the 147th Psalm, v. 5, says of it [Vulg.]: "Of His understanding is no number." And the wise man [Sir. 24, 29. Vulg.], "He that drinketh of me thirsteth for me more." 2c. So then, what should I do with the secure, sated conceited masters who neither fight nor act?

6. so i probably hold, is such no one not,

He can do everything that the Holy Spirit says in this short psalm; but if they should say or teach anything to anyone, they would not know how to approach either behind or in front. To the shame of such unrighteous people, and in honor of the word of God, I have taken it before me to interpret it, so that one may see how God's word, however bright and mean it may be, is nevertheless all groundless; and even if it could be reasoned out (as it is not), it is nevertheless groundless because of virtue and power, and always makes the heart new and fresh, refreshes, refreshes, comforts, strengthens without ceasing. I see and learn daily how the dear prophets practiced the ten commandments, and where their preaching and prophecy spring and flow from. So let us take from 1) this psalm four parts, namely, a prophecy, a revelation, a teaching and an exhortation.

From divination.

(7) Then he prophesies and proclaims with short and few words the great work and miracle of God, namely, the gospel and kingdom of Christ, which at that time was promised but not yet revealed, and says: "Praise the Lord, all Gentiles. This is so much to say that God is not only God of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles, and not of a small part of the Gentiles, but of "all the Gentiles" as far as the world is. For he who calls "all the Gentiles" does not exclude any. Thus we Gentiles are assured and certain that we also belong to God and to heaven, and shall not be condemned, even though we are not Abraham's bodily blood and flesh; as the Jews boast as if they alone were God's children and heirs of heaven, because of the bodily birth of Abraham, and the holy arch-fathers, kings and prophets. True, they alone have the honor before all men, that they are the children of such holy fathers; but the honor they have is not only that they are God's children and heirs of His kingdom of heaven, but this psalm sings and testifies that we Gentiles also have the same honor.

8 For if all the Gentiles are to praise God, it must first be that he has become their God. If he is to be their God, they must know him and believe in him, and forsake all idolatry, since one cannot praise God with an idolatrous mouth or with an unbelieving heart. If they are to believe, they must first hear his word and thereby receive the Holy Spirit, who cleanses and enlightens their hearts through faith. For one cannot come to faith, nor obtain the Holy Spirit, the word must first be heard; as St. Paul says Rom. 10:14: "How shall they believe, of whom they have heard nothing?" Gal. 3:2: "Ye have received the Spirit through the preaching of faith." If they are to hear His word, preachers must be sent to them to proclaim the word of God; for all Gentiles are not able to come to Jerusalem, or to abstain from the small crowd of Jews. So also here he does not say, "All Gentiles, come to Jerusalem," but lets them stay where they are and addresses them there in their place, so that they may praise God.

(9) This is what I am saying, if anyone would drag this psalm with a Jewish gloss, that all the Gentiles should come to Jerusalem and become Jews. Jerusalem would be much too small, if she were as large as the whole kingdom of David and Solomon was before. For all the Gentiles and the whole race is too great; even about this the text does not give. Thus we have the fact before us that God sent His apostles and disciples to all the Gentiles, preaching the gospel, giving the Holy Spirit, redeeming them from sin, death and the devil, cleansing their hearts through faith, and thus adopting them as children and heirs and as His people, yet He did not call them to Jerusalem, nor did He call them Jews. There are also enough other sayings in Scripture that testify that God's word should come to the Gentiles and among the Gentiles, so that they remain in their place; as Ps. 19:5: "Their reverberation has gone out into all the earth, and their word to the end of the world," just as the prophet Zephaniah prophesies that the Gentiles should remain Gentiles, and yet God's word should come to them.

1) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers; Erlanger: an.

people, and says [Cap. 2:11], "He shall weaken all the gods of the earth, and they shall worship him every man in his place, and all the isles of the Gentiles," 1) and the like.

(10) Now behold what a tumult this little psalm makes in the whole world, how it storms and tears among the idols. For the world has been full of idolatry, rot and error, so that even the Romans, who were the most powerful and the most intelligent, hold more than a hundred gods, thus dividing the world into innumerable errors; Nor may this Psalm contain such thoughts, and also freely say, that all such rottenness and idolatry should cease, and all the nations should come into one faith, that they should all honor and praise one God, and that through the word of God, out of such diverse worship, one united flock and one shepherd should become.

(11) It is a wonder how a human heart can take such a thing into consideration, believe it, and prophesy for certain that it should happen; although it must be remembered how hard the devil would oppose, resist, and hinder it with all the power and wisdom in the world, so that it would have been an exceedingly impossible thing to see. He is still allowed to say it, and yet it has happened, and both are great miracles, both that a man should believe such a thing, and it has also happened.

(12) There we see how the word of God must be an almighty power of God, Rom. 1, 16. For it has cleared up the idolatry, the mobs and the error, which at that time prevailed in the world, so purely that not a hair of it is exaggerated, in spite of the fact that emperors, princes, wise men, saints, and all devils, and the whole world have raged against it so exceedingly vehemently and stiff-necked. For the world has never taken upon itself to fight against idolatry. It can suffer all kinds of error, but when God's word comes, it becomes mad and foolish, and does not want to suffer it; nor has it had to suffer it, and has perished over it.

(13) This work is the greatest that God has done on earth, much greater than the work of the Lord.

the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, when only the king Pharaoh drowned with his people in the Red Sea. But here the whole, angry, senseless world was drowned, and God's word remained, and Christianity was preserved. We should praise this work and comfort ourselves with it, as we can see from this great example that God's word will and must remain, no matter how much the devil and the world rage and rage; it has done enough great miracles in the world, and it will not diminish now.

(14) The heretics afterward also opposed it with a great multitude, with power and art; but where are they now? They are gone, the word still stands, the Christians are still there. Now, at this time, the Turk, the end-Christian and many others are also fighting against it, but they will gain as much from it as the previous ones. Only beware, and give room, give way and follow at times (that is my advice), whom the word attacks, it must win. If you do not want it with grace, it will happen with disgrace, because it is said: *Verbum Domini manet in aeternum*, "God's word remains forever" [Is. 40, 8]. If you do not want to believe it, then come to know it.

It has overthrown the power of the world (which protects idolatry). It has put down the wisdom of the world (which defends heresy). Of course, he will also overcome the wickedness of the world (as both idolatry and heresy are now defended), so that nothing will stand against him. This is our consolation now, and we also see that it is trying to press on and penetrate. For many plans and cleverness, which began against it, have been completely destroyed, and great rage and violence have been brought to shame.

Praise the Lord, all the nations.

16 "Gentiles," which in Hebrew is *Goim*, the Jews commonly call all peoples who are not Jews, just as we do, and all peoples are called Gentiles if they are not Christians. But its actual interpretation is that it means a nation, or a whole country's people; just as we Germans are a nation or *Goi*, Bohemia also one, Hungary one, Poland one, and so on, that also the Jewish people is often called *Goi*, as 2 Mos. 19, 6: "You shall call My holy

1) This last sentence: "as also the prophet" 2c. up to here is missing in the Coburg edition.

Be goi." Is. 1, 4: "Woe to the sinful Goi", and many more places; and also in this verse the Jews are understood, when he says: "Praise, all Goim", that is, all countries, all nations, or all peoples, all kinds of languages, kingdoms and principalities 2c. We Germans do not really have a word for it, so I have left it at the common usage that Goim is called Gentiles, because it does not hinder the understanding. But the little word peoples, Ummim, where he says, praise the Lord, all peoples, I think, is actually plebem, that is, the people of any city, which is called the community, that Goim are the people of a whole country under a king, prince or lord, Ummim, however, the people of any city or community.

I say this because the end-Christ and his followers think that they are not Christians, what is not under their tyranny. The spirit says here "all Gentiles and peoples", which will not lie, of course. "All Gentiles," however, have not ever been under One Lord or Bishop, nor will they ever come under any. For all this dominion over all the nations belongs to you alone, of whom this psalm sings, saying: "Praise the Lord, all nations"; the other princes and kings will have to be satisfied with some things, and will not become like God.

(18) Therefore, he who is not under the pope is not a heretic. For if it were a necessary article of faith that all the world should be under the pope, then God would have to be a liar, since such an article has never been fulfilled nor true, nor will it ever be true. Now all articles of faith, as God's word and promises, must be true and fulfilled; for the future article of the resurrection has already been fulfilled in some, and especially in Christ Himself. But that all the world is under the pope has never been fulfilled or true for a moment. And if all the popes had had it, except one, the article would still be false in the same one, as he who would be a pope, should have all the world, according to Christ's word, and yet would not have it.

19 Therefore it cannot be an article of faith, and had it ever been fulfilled, it should have been fulfilled in St. Peter's time, whom they make the first pope,

and is also the greatest, with whom Christ himself spoke, and promised and gave the keys to his person. If Peter should have had it, and yet did not, then Christ has not kept his word, and no pope may hope that it will happen to him; it is a lie and foolishness to do so.

(20) How can it be true that all the Gentiles should come under one Christ and praise God, when all the Gentiles persecute Christ, as He Himself says in Matt. 24:9: "You must be hated by all men for My name's sake"? Answer: The psalm does not say that all men, or all those who are among the Gentiles, should praise him; but all Gentiles, that is, where there are Gentiles, or country and cities, there the gospel should go, and bring some to faith into the kingdom of Christ. Though all men believe not, yet Christ reigneth in all places where men are, keeping his word, baptism, and sacrament there against all devils and men: for the gospel and baptism must come throughout all the world: as they are come, and come daily, as he saith Marc. 16:15, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." And Ps. 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the strongholds of the heavens preach the work of His hands," that is, as far as the heavens and their strongholds go, Christ is preached everywhere. Wherever there is the gospel, baptism and sacrament, there is his church, and there are certainly living saints there; there they praise him, and he rules over them, even if they are vain young people and children. But there are also old people among them; that must not be missing.

021 Yea, saith he, this is a small kingdom, that there be so few Christians among the Gentiles. Dearly beloved, it is not a small kingdom, neither is it a small power; first, that Christ, for the sake of the same few, should be so mighty there, as to have the devil, the world, death, life, and all things, in his hand. If this were not so, the devil would not let him keep his gospel and baptism for an hour, not even for a moment, and the world would not let a Christian live for an hour. But the fact that the gospel, baptism and Christians remain, he shows his almighty power over the world.

all the devils and men that are among all the heathen in all places, as Ps. 110:2 says, "Thou shalt reign among thine enemies," and Ps. 45:12 [Vulg.], "Kings shall worship thee in the midst of thine enemies."

(22) Secondly, that he also protects and preserves his Christians with the same power, and then governs them in a special way, namely with the Holy Spirit, redeems them from sins, death and hell, and makes them pious, alive and blessed. Therefore, the fewer Christians and the more unbelievers and devils there are in a place, the more mightily and powerfully Christ reigns there. If he has little to rule there, he has all the more to defend and protect. This is from the first part.

From Revelation.

23 This psalm also reveals a great, special secret, which was known to few even in the time of the apostles and has now almost disappeared again under the papacy, namely, that the kingdom of Christ is not a temporal, transient, earthly kingdom, which is to be governed by laws and rights, but a spiritual, heavenly and eternal kingdom, which must be governed apart from and above all laws, rights and external ways. For here he calls the Gentiles to remain Gentiles; he does not demand of them (as is also mentioned above, 9.10) that they should run from their country or cities to Jerusalem; he does not demand that they should abandon or renounce their worldly rights, customs and ways and become Jews, just as little as he demands of the Jews themselves that they should abandon their law.

(24) Everything he demands is different and higher than external, worldly law, laws or ceremonies. Every country and city keeps or changes its law, he does not inquire; where they are kept, they do not hinder his kingdom, for he says here: "Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles." Gentiles, however, are people in countries and cities (as said in § 16), but countries and cities cannot be nor exist, they must have their rights, customs and ways, so that they govern, judge, punish, protect and keep peace; they may change these according to opportunity, but they cannot do without them.

25. for where we hear Gentiles or kings called in Scripture, we must look not only at the person with the crown, but also at their whole regiment, with laws, offices, rights, customs, usages and habits, as their kingdom stands and goes within; otherwise what kind of kings or lords would they be? Apple kings or painted lords they would have to be; as Ps. 72, 10.: "The kings of the sea and in the islands will bring gifts."

(26) Yes, with such words the Holy Spirit confirms the worldly rights and rule of all countries, and considers them kings, and thereby gives the understanding that they remain in their rule, and that everyone should be subject and obedient to his king and lord. He does not punish them because they are kings, or nations, or peoples; he himself created them, ordered them, and divided the world among them to rule, as Paul testifies in Acts 17:26. 17, 26. also testifies. If he wanted to rebuke or punish them, he would not call them kings, Gentiles or nations, but would address them in other words. Since he calls them kings and pagans and confirms them, we should rather let them be kings and pagans, that is, nations or worldly rulers, and hold them in honor.

(27) With this he also confirms all crafts, professions and trades, which are in such secular dominions, they are called what they want, as long as they are honest and praiseworthy, according to their own land law, be it citizen, farmer, shoemaker, tailor, scribe, horseman, master, servant 2c. For without all these (says Sirach [Cap. 38, 36.]) no city nor country exists: that one should know, such estates in themselves are not against God, and must not let them go, if one wants to serve God, and crawl into a monastery, or otherwise set up a sect; yes, they are all estates appointed by God, that they should serve Him by the word Gen. 3, 19.: "You shall eat your bread in the sweat of your nose." This is what he wants to have kept.

(28) There is yet another thing which he requireth of the nations and of the people in this psalm: Say not, Ply your trade, all ye heathen: for the same is already commanded in Genesis 3:19, as is heard. Let it not suffice him that thou shouldest become a carthusian, a monk, a nun, a priest; yea, let it please him less than the least craft upon the earth.

Earth; rejects and condemns it, because they are self-chosen classes, which flee, avoid and despise the sweating of the nose (Gen. 3, 19. commanded to all men), as if they wanted to establish better services, than God Himself has established with the sweating of the nose; as the clever, mischievous reason always wants to master God, and stings their own with God.

29 What is it then that he demands? It is "praise the Lord. Oh, this is a high demand, and a midday, unpleasant estimation, and tax beaten upon the world (as it understands and interprets it); so this psalm becomes a heretic and the most poisonous sermon that has come upon the earth. For what does it mean to praise the Lord? It means to deny all other gods, to abandon all other worship, to condemn all your own holiness, wisdom and merit.

(30) Neither country nor people, neither kings nor lords, can suffer that their gods and worship should be condemned, and their wisdom and holiness rejected. Rather (they say), the doctrine wants to take away our gods (as Apost. 19, 24. ff. Demetrius lamented), and our worship shall be nothing, our fathers and we shall all have been fools, our custom, old usage and old tradition shall be error. The boys are rebels and blasphemers, want to make us a new God and teach us new faith; to the fire, to the gallows, to the executioner with the boys! Then it goes, as the 2nd Psalm, v. 1. ff., says: "Why do the nations rage, and the peoples speak so vainly? Why do the kings of the earth rebel, and the rulers take counsel against the Lord and his anointed?" and say, "Let us break up their strongholds, and cast away their cords from us."

31 And truly it is worthy of wonder and question why they rage so against the LORD, whom they ought to praise; and reproach his kingdom and dominion, building and hanging, as if they should be his prisoners, when he does nothing to them, takes nothing from them, calls them kings, country and people, lets them also remain kings, country and people, and keep what they have, desiring only that he may be their God, which does them no harm.

but brings them all good, both temporally and eternally (as follows in the other verse), helps them out of the bonds of the devil, and frees them from the snares of death and sins. He desires nothing else than what is due to him according to all law, and demands his own, namely the divinity, that he may be God, in addition to what is most necessary and useful to them, namely their own life and salvation. But nothing else comes of it; it must be called bondage and ropes, it must be called unpleasant essays, it must be called heresy and doctrine of the devil, it must be called turmoil, discord and strife, it must be called new God and new faith, and the rioting and raging they started must all be the doctrine's fault. They want to be called children of peace, fathers, masters and friends, even if they are nonsensical in murdering, burning and persecuting, yet the dear doctrine lets them remain, and calls them kings, princes, lords, country and people, teaches peace with all diligence.

With this the world shows that it is the devil's own, blind, possessed, mad and foolish, that they persecute God, who gives them temporal peace and all goods, leaves and confirms them, and also gives them eternal peace, heavenly goods and infinitely blessed life; must still be blasphemed about it as a heretic and rebel, and also bear the guilt of the raving, which they start and do.

If anyone has not read or heard these things from the world in the time of the apostles, martyrs and heretics, let him see and grasp them now in our time in the Sophists and Papists, from whom nothing is taken, but everything they have is confirmed by this doctrine, and only it is desired that they should praise the Lord, leave their old idolatry, and change their unchristian worship, that they may have peace and life here and there. But how they stand on this, everyone sees well, must not say much about it now.

(34) And this is also what hinders the Jews even today, that they do not want to become Christians, because they cannot stand that the Gentiles should be called God's people, and yet remain Gentiles. They think that one must circumcise oneself and keep their old Law of Moses; they do not hear and see that God here

In this Psalm, and in many other places, he calls the Gentiles to his praise, and yet lets them remain Gentiles or nations according to their outward nature and laws; So that he might mightily abolish the law of Moses, as not being necessary for praising God or becoming God's people, because here he calls the Gentiles to praise God, who lived uncircumcised and without the law of Moses in their own laws, and yet cannot praise God unless they first become God's people through his word, as is said above [§ 8].

35 Not that God herewith despises or condemns the Law of Moses, as if it were sin or error in Himself, but that He demands something higher and different, which is, if one does and lives according to the Law of Moses, namely, that one should praise the Lord among all the Gentiles. If they do not want to do this, then all their being and doing, kept according to the law of Moses, should and must be lost, condemned and sin. Just as Paul allowed the Jews everywhere to be circumcised and to keep the laws of Moses, if they only believed in Christ above all things and considered faith alone necessary for salvation, even without the law; and again allowed the Gentiles to remain in their laws and rights, if they only believed in the same Christ, and considered such faith alone necessary for salvation, even without their law and right, as he says in 1 Corinthians 7:19. 7, 19: "Circumcision is nothing, and foreskin is nothing, but keeping God's commandment." Item, Rom. 3, 20.: "By the work of the law no one is justified before God." And again Gal. 6, 15: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor foreskin counts for anything, but a new creature." And 1 Cor. 7:18: "Let him who is circumcised not put on foreskin; and let him who is uncircumcised not put on circumcision."

(36) Yes, they say, we praise the Lord in the law of Moses, therefore we are certainly his people. Answer: But they do not praise the Lord, who wants to be praised by all the Gentiles and is also praised, because they do not want to believe that the Gentiles can praise God without the Law of Moses. Therefore, they do not consider God to be the Lord who is praised among all the nations, as this psalm sings and all the Scriptures say. For, should it be true that this

Psalm, then God must become one God among all the Gentiles, and yet they remain Gentiles without Mosiah's law.

(37) Where has there ever been a God whom all the nations have praised, but this God of ours, whom I Christians praise and honor? And where is a God whose word has gone forth so far into all the world, and has been so powerfully received and maintained, though kings and princes have opposed it without ceasing, as the gospel of Christ is? Or, how can there ever come a God whom all the Gentiles should praise, when they should become Jews, and not remain Gentiles, as this Psalm prophesies should happen? If all Gentiles should praise God, and yet be called and remain Gentiles, and not have to become Jews, it is certain that the Mosaic Law is not necessary for praising God or becoming God's people.

38. Therefore, it must be certain that the Law of Moses must be finished and abolished, since what this Psalm says has happened, namely that all the Gentiles praise God and become God's people, without Law and circumcision, and the Jews must become Gentiles, that is, they must believe that the God whom all the Gentiles praise is their own true God, and the God of all their fathers and prophets, who proclaims to them through this Psalm that He must become the God not of the Jews alone, but of all the Gentiles. If they do not do this, they deny their own God and do not believe his word, which he says here that he wants to be the God of all the nations.

39. he promised Abraham himself before he was circumcised and long before Moses' time, when he said to him: "You shall no longer be called Abram, but Abraham; for I have made you the father of many nations," Gen 17:4. here he says that Abraham shall not be the father of one people, but of many peoples or nations. So it is certain that the Jews are only a few goy, and not many goy. If the Scriptures are true, Abraham's God must be the God of many Gentiles, and not only of the Jews. But they would not be Gentiles if they all had to become a Jewish people.

40 Therefore the law of Moses is henceforth no longer necessary, when the God has come to

praise all the Gentiles and accept them as one God. If they want to circumcise themselves and keep their Law of Moses, God does not ask anything, provided that they do not consider it necessary for them to remain God's people. For where they consider it necessary, it is just as much said: The Gentiles may not be God's people, so God cannot be God to the Gentiles without Mosiah's law. That is just as much as said, God teaches us and keeps us faithful in this and similar psalms.

(41) And how come we should now keep Moses' law among all the Gentiles, if we wanted to be God's people? Was it not necessary at that time, when Jerusalem and Judaism, and Moses still stood high, before God came among all the Gentiles? For Jonah the prophet abundantly testifies that the city of Nineveh is called the city of God, and also had the right God of the Jews; and yet they were Gentiles, and also remained uncircumcised, and without Moses' law, in their own law. So Lot and Job were also God's servants, without circumcision and Mosiah's law. Likewise the king Pharaoh in Egypt and his people at the time of Joseph. Item, the prince Naaman of Syria in the time of Elisha. Item, the widow of Sarepta in the time of Elijah; and the like, all of whom have known and pledged the right God of Abraham, and yet have not become Jews. Therefore it is an old blindness that they hope to make all Gentiles Jews in Messiah's time, when before such a thing was not necessary for any Gentile to become God's people. It is enough to praise God (says the Psalm here), that is, recognize, believe, praise and give thanks; this is what makes God's people.

I have said this not only against the error of the Jews, but also much more against some erroneous spirits who want to burden us Gentiles with Mosiah's laws, which God Himself also took from the Jews. Therefore, both spiritual and worldly rulers want to master it, want to confuse the consciences with it, and change worldly rights, just as if the gospel taught nothing different and higher than worldly rights, or

43) It is true that in the Law of Moses the worldly regiment and the outward manner are finer,

The law and customs of all nations are such that it would be desirable for all the world to have more than one share in such rights. But because it is not necessary, and without unmistakable danger and harm such a change cannot happen, let it remain a wish, and let each country keep its rights, customs and ways, as it is said: "Some countries, some customs. And keep your conscience free and clear from the law of Moses, and know that God demands no more of all Gentiles than His praise and glory, as the gospel preaches of Him to all the world, and be obedient to all that He has taught and commanded in the gospel, then you are His people, and praise the one Lord with all Gentiles and Jews, in one faith and worship.

(44) Yes, it is very good and beneficial that God has so dealt with Jerusalem, torn apart the Jews' rule, abolished Moses, and disturbed them so that they will never arise again. For because they are so stiff-necked that they will not accept the Gentiles' God (who is also their own God), since they are so horribly afflicted and ruined, what should they do if they still had their regiment, law and Jerusalem whole? Likewise, such wrath of God is an example, terrible to tyrants, and comforting to believers throughout the world. Terrible (I say), because if God did not want to spare Jerusalem, the finest city that existed on earth, which was also the most beloved to Him, His own house and dwelling place, and the most holy, in which the greatest saints and prophets still lie; Nor did he regard the most beautiful government and law on earth, which he himself had established; nor did he regard that the Jews were his own people and the heirs of the holy fathers, blood and flesh, but tore and scattered all things, because they would not have this Lord of all the Gentiles for their God: What then should he spare to other kings, and countries, and people of the Gentiles, who also would not suffer this LORD?

45. 1) In our time, too, the monasteries and convents will be torn apart.

and be torn to pieces, as it has begun, regardless of how beautiful and good it seems to be. For they also blaspheme this Lord of all the Gentiles, whom they should praise, and do not want to suffer him, but exalt and praise their own work and nature so highly that they not only want to be Christians and become blessed, but also higher and better than the common Christians, and in addition sell and communicate the work and merit to the other Christians, thereby subjecting themselves to help them to heaven; all of which is an unspeakable abomination.

(46) And what do they do but say in effect: A bad, common Christian man is nothing compared to us; the Christian's standing is much lower than our standing; through baptism no one can rise as high as through our plates and caps; a Christian would never be saved if our standing did not help him. But what else is this said, but that baptism is nothing, Christ's blood is nothing, Christ's death and life is nothing, God's word is nothing, God Himself is nothing; we, we are higher and better than baptism, Christ and God. For if they should consider themselves less than God, they should truly consider themselves less than Christ and His blood; if they should consider themselves less than Christ's blood, they should also consider themselves less than baptism, which is blessed with Christ's blood, yes, baptizes with Christ's blood; if they should consider themselves less than baptism, they should also consider themselves less than the common Christians, and their status less than the common Christian status; but if they should consider their status less than the common Christian status, where would they remain?

If they are to continue in their splendor and glory, they must make themselves something higher, better and holier than the common Christians are, that is, they must consider themselves higher than all holy Christendom or the Christian church is, higher than baptism, higher than Christ's blood, higher than the Holy Spirit and God Himself is. This means to praise oneself and to blaspheme the Lord of all Gentiles. Now no one can deny that they have done this, and that they have exalted their status above that of the common Christians.

the work itself present, so that they are convinced.

(48) If they kept their monasteries and convents for this purpose, and also used them to educate Christian youth and teach them the faith and discipline, so that they would have fine persons for Christian offices, and would therefore be nothing other than Christian schools, as they were founded from the beginning, and the names of the prelatures, as provost, dean, scholastic, cantor, and the like, well indicate, then they would be fine monasteries. But to make them into a better state than the common Christian state is wrong, and denies and curses Christ. They are to serve and help the Christian state, like the schools, housekeeping and secular government, along with all other creatures; but they are not to be better or higher than the Christian state. The Christian state should hover over everything and everything, like heaven over earth, because it is Christ's state itself and God's own work. Because they do not want to do this, they must, like the stiff-necked Jerusalem, also be torn apart and broken up. This Lord of all the Gentiles must be praised and allowed to remain, or everything will come to nothing.

49. he said it in the second psalm, and will have this LORD to be king and GOD among all nations. He who will not, let him go to ruins, be it ever great, mighty, wise, fine, holy. "Let all the Gentiles praise this LORD." I mean, we see also indeed how he has reduced to ashes the greatest city of Rome, and the mightiest empire on earth, even above it, and has so torn and shattered the mighty regiment that scarcely any individual shards remain. For he saith Ps. 2:9: "Thou shalt feed them with a rod of iron, and shatter them as a pot." And again, v. 12: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way." That is, beware, if you do not obey the Son, there is no more grace, but only ruin, so that both you and your way (that is, your nature, actions, government, laws, rights, worship 2c.) must perish and never rise again. For he does not want any service, no regiment, no

They do not know or know holiness, wisdom, power, height, greatness, people, country or people, but praise the Lord, who has become King and God among all the nations, and is preached, as this Psalm says. This and no other. For those who do not believe, let experience teach them, as the Jews and Romans learned. This is ours, who believe, comfort, and certain hope of our salvation.

50 Let this be said of the revelation of this Psalm. For it is still today a high and great understanding where someone knows that a Christian being is a higher and even different thing than all worldly and spiritual rights, laws, outward holiness, government, and how it may be called, whether it be with Jews or Gentiles. For St. Paul himself boasts in Eph. 3, 3. that it was a revelation made to the apostles themselves, that the Gentiles without the law of Moses, yes, without all and above all laws, should be God's people; as we also read in Acts 10 and 11 that St. Peter himself did not know this until a vision from heaven happened to him, when he had to go to Cornelio, the Gentile.

51 And (as far as I understand) the whole book of Acts was written for the sake of this Psalm and similar Scriptures, so that it would be proven that the Gentiles would become God's people without Mosiah's law. As also there Apost. 15, 6. ff. a special concilium was held about this at Jerusalem, and only Peter, Paul and Barnabas held forth about this piece, against the whole multitude of all believers. So it is very difficult for reason and nature that spiritual and secular status should be nothing compared to Christian status. Reason always wants to mix it up, to make a worldly or spiritual regime out of the Christian state, which is to be grasped and governed by laws and works, and loses everything over it, that it does not know what Christ or the Christian state is, as we have also experienced all this so far, unfortunately, all too well under the papacy.

52 It is called a revelation and remains a revelation. For you will find nothing of this in all spiritual law, in all laws of all popes, they are called Decretal, Clementin, Sexten, Extravaganten, or whatever they want,

in all summists, in all scribenten sententiarum, in all monks' sermons, in all ordinations of the estates, in all ordinariis of the monasteries and convents, in all rules of all kinds of monks and nuns, in all postils of Scripture, in all statutes of all concilia, in all St. Hieronymo, in all St. Gregory, in all the cassations of all theologians, in all the lections of all high schools, in all the masses and vigils, in all the ceremonies of all churches, in all the foundations for souls, in all the brotherhoods of all sects, in all the pilgrimages in all places, in all the services of Mary and all the saints, in all the indulgences of all the bulls, in all the chancery of the pope, in all the court of the pope, in all the courts of all the bishops: nothing, nothing do you find (I say) of this piece in all of them, but rather vain hindrance and blindness of this revelation.

What have the pope and the bishops made of the gospel and the Christian church other than a purely spiritual, even a worldly regiment? What do the pagans, the fanatics, and the mad saints seek now but to turn the gospel into an outward holiness or a new monasticism in gray skirts and sour clothes? It is said: "Praise the Lord, all Gentiles"; be Gentiles, stay Gentiles, become Gentiles, found spiritual orders, establish rules and order, make laws and worldly regiments, keep chastity, become married, and what you can think up of the outward being and doing, as you wish; only take care that you do not think to be Christians and to become blessed with it; only do not think that such is called Christianity or Christian being. For all reason can devise and establish such things as these, and none of Christ's may do so; it must come higher than all that you may do and devise, namely, that you praise the Lord. But the above praises you yourselves, and not the Lord; for it is your thing, done in yourselves and by yourselves out of reason, and planted and created beforehand in nature.

From the teaching.

(54) There he teaches the highest wisdom on earth, namely faith, which is divine, not human, a secret,

and not manifest, a heavenly and not earthly wisdom, which no man knows (as Paul says 1 Cor. 2, 6.), not even the princes of this world know. Therefore it must be called the worst heresy before the world, and be condemned as the doctrine of the devil.

(55) And it is an unpleasant thing that this psalm may sing, "God's goodness is upon us," and that this should be the reason why all the Gentiles should praise God, namely, that they have grace and mercy and all good things from God, all for nothing, without any merit, work or law. Against this the Jews boast that they have God's law and their own works, as St. Paul testifies Rom. 3:2, and the 147th Psalm, v. 19, 20, also says: "He declares his word to Jacob, and his judgments to Israel; so he does no Gentile, nor does he let them know his judgments." And it is true that the law and the prophets were theirs alone until the time of Christ, as St. Paul says in Romans 3. But after Christ, and with Christ, all the Gentiles have the gospel, namely the preaching of grace, as this Psalm says.

But there are fine words in this verse, which should not be spoken so coldly and crudely. First of all, he speaks of "his goodness", that is, not our work, holiness, wisdom, but his grace and mercy. What then is God's mercy? It is that out of pure mercy, for the sake of Christ, our dear bishop and mediator, he forgives all our sins, puts away all wrath, leads us from idolatry and error to the truth, purifies, enlightens, sanctifies and justifies our hearts through faith and the Holy Spirit, and chooses us as children and heirs, adorns and decorates us with his gifts, redeems and protects us from the devil's power, and in addition gives us eternal life and blessedness; and yet also provides and sustains this temporal life with all its necessities, through the service and cooperation of all the creatures of heaven and earth. None of which, not even the least, the whole world can ever deserve, let alone all of them, or some of the great ones; indeed, through their idolatry, ingratitude, contempt and all kinds of sin, they deserve without ceasing the wrath of God, death and hell.

57 But where this is true (as yes must be true), it is not true.

it certainly follows that our work, wisdom and holiness are nothing in the sight of God. For if it is God's goodness, it is not our merit; if it is our merit, it is not God's goodness, Rom. 11:6. Therefore, the Jews with their laws and works may not stand, much less the pagans with their idolatries, and just as little the sophists with the abominations of their masses, foundations, monasteries, pilgrimages, and the like innumerable little human fiefdoms and works.

Why do they all persecute this doctrine of the grace of God and call it heresy? Because they do not want to despise or reject its teaching and work. For that God's grace gives us so much [as is said in 29 ff.], they might well suffer; but that their thing should be nothing at all, and that only the mere, pure grace should be valid before God, that must be heresy. For they also want to have their hand in the sod, and do so much by their free will that they may earn and drain God's grace from him, along with all the above-mentioned goods; so that it is not God's grace, but our merit that first obtains grace, and so that we are the journeymen who lay the first cornerstone, upon which God then builds his grace and goodness, so that he must thank, praise and worship us, and we become his gods; But not, again, that we should thank, praise (as this Psalm says) and worship him, and that he should be our God, unless we have first begun the good, and built a foundation for his graces from our merit.

(59) These babble this psalm with the mouth, but with the heart they interpret and read it thus: Let all the earth praise us, and let all the people magnify us; for our work is over them, and our doctrine shall endure forever. But that they read thus in the heart, they cannot deny. Then they convince all their endowments, letters, 1) fraternity letters, in which they seal, certify, promise, and sell, rightly and honestly, of a perpetual, eternal purchase, their vigils and soul masses and all their good works, and share the same with their founders, both ancestors and descendants, that they may thereby be freed from sins, and from the sins of the world.

1) "Letters" is missing in the Erlanger. It will be meant "the indulgence of the bulls" (§ 82).

The first two are saved from purgatory and become blessed, as if they had never been baptized or Christians.

60) Where is God's grace beforehand, which does this without work? Yes, it must therefore also be purchased by other works beforehand. Does this not mean to blasphemously and abominably set and exalt our work for and above God's grace? Does this not mean to take away God's divinity and to deny Christ? They still do not repent and amend such things, but stubbornly they still want to hide and adorn them. But their seals and letters, bulls and books, are too much in the day, and bear witness too powerfully against them, and suffer neither covering nor adorning.

Now choose which one you want, this verse has three minds. So the first one reads: Our work prevails over us before the grace of God. The other: Our work is without Christ, but beside the grace of God over us. The third: God's grace rules over us without and before all works, through Christ. The first two are of the Jews, Turks, Sophists and all false Christians, invented out of their own heads. The third is of the Holy Spirit and of all true Christians.

(62) That the first two are also Sophists, so that they are also true Jews and Turks, is not only proved by their letters, seals, bulls and books, but they also confirm it by the fact that they still defend their work, and murder, burn and persecute the people about it most horribly. For if they thought the third mind was right, they would not only have to refrain from persecution, but also change and improve all their monasteries, convents, and the whole of their being, because nothing else has been in use in them up to now, except to sell their work to the people, to redeem them from sins, and to bring them to heaven; this is undeniable. For I and all of us have also been in such abominations ourselves, have helped teach and do it; but praise be to God who has helped us out.

On the other hand, he says: "it rules", that is, it reigns over us, *imperat et regnat gratia*. It is a kingdom of grace that is more powerful in and over us than all wrath, sin and evil. This word has never been understood by a sophist or a saint of works.

understand it as little as a Jew and a Turk. For since they want to advance and obtain grace by works, it is not possible for them to know what the kingdom of grace or the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of Christ means, but their heart must be like this (as it was for me, since I was a sophist): if they do good, they have grace; if they sin or fall, or feel sin, grace also falls and is lost; they must again seek and find it by their own works; otherwise they cannot think.

64 But this does not mean the kingdom of grace, which rules over works, but a kingdom of works, which rules over grace. But "to rule", *Gabar* Hebrew, means here to be in charge and to have the upper hand and to be powerful, so that you must understand the kingdom of grace in a childlike way, that God has built a new, great heaven over us who believe through the gospel, which is called the heaven of grace, and is much, much greater and more beautiful than this visible heaven, moreover eternal, certain and everlasting.

(65) Whosoever therefore is under this heaven cannot sin, nor be in sins; for it is a heaven of grace, infinite and eternal. And if any man sin or fall, he shall not therefore fall out of that same heaven; for he shall not abide under it, but shall go with the devil into hell, as unbelievers do. And though sin is felt, or death bares its teeth, and the devil terrifies, yet here is much more grace ruling over all sin, and much more life ruling over death, and much more God ruling over all devils; that such sin, death, devils in this kingdom is not 1) different, but like dark clouds under the bodily sky, which cover the sky for a time, but they may not rule over it, they must remain under it, and let the sky remain over them, rule and reign; but they must finally pass away. So, even though sin bites, death terrifies, and the devil makes himself felt with temptations, they are still clouds; the heaven of grace rules and reigns, they must remain under it, and finally depart.

1) Erlanger: nothing.

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(66) This cannot be done by works, but by faith alone, which is sure that such a heaven of grace is above it, without its work, which it also looks upon when it sins or feels sin, and is comforted by it, without all its merits or works.

But those who want to deaden sins and death with works, must of necessity despair, because it is impossible to know all sin, Psalm 19:13, even the little that can be known, and the devil or God's judgment will open up those sins that cannot be known or known. So the conscience will be frightened and say: O Lord God, I have never done anything for this sin. For it has been accustomed to do enough for sin with works, and now it is hurriedly confronted with so many and great sins, which it has never known, much less done enough for them, so it must despair.

(68) Then the devil adds, and makes all his good works to be sins. Where does he want to go now? He knows nothing of the kingdom of grace, that God's goodness rules over us, nor is he accustomed to trust in His grace. So both works and the doctrine of works perish and disappear like smoke. Yes, it is good to talk about works and doing good and to make money with them until the hour comes when the devil and God's judgment stir the conscience: then it is found how annual, poisonous, harmful and damning such teaching is. But [it] is then too long persevered, where God does not particularly signs and wonders.

(69) But he that is in the kingdom of grace, whose heart is thus, Whether he feeleth right sin, or no sin; whether the devil comprehendeth sin, or no sin; whether he destroyeth good works, or no good works; whether the judgment of God threateneth, or terrifieth, he saith, These are indeed sour and dark clouds, but the grace of God ruleth and reigneth over us; the heaven of grace is mightier than the hell of sins; the heaven of grace abideth for ever, the hell of sins passeth away. For this verse does not deny 2). Yes, he confesses that the believers

He says that they feel the judgment of God, sin, death and the devil, and are afraid of them, but on the other hand he says that they have defiance, and grace is above, and has the upper hand and dominion, so that they can sing: Praise be to God that his grace is over us, and is mightier than our sin 2c.

(70) Behold, this is done without works, and must be done without works, or both grace and heaven would be lost in a moment; as David also tried this many times, and laments, Rev. 119:92: "If thy law were not my delight, I should perish in my misery. But he who is untried knows nothing about it, and must attack sin with works, to do enough for it and to curb it. This is no different from putting out fires with straws, or measuring the wind with bushels, and doing such lost and harmful work.

Third, he says, "about us. Who are they? For by this word "us" he separates himself from all others who are not with us. This is, as said above [§ 65], over the poor sinners alone, who recognize themselves, and feel that they are in sins, death, and all misfortune. For the saints of works have no right to grace, nor do they feel in themselves any sin, death, or devil, but only holiness, life, and the kingdom of heaven; they are the dear child.

For this reason, this verse is twice false and untruthful here. First, that in our rebellion such our doctrine and faith must not be God's grace, but vain doctrine of the devil and God's wrath. Secondly, that our outward nature cannot be viewed in any other way than as if God were our enemy and had handed us over to the devil. So that both doctrine and life cannot be viewed in any other way than as if the devil ruled over us and not God's grace. Again, there it can be seen, with our enemies, as if God were their friend, and both rule over their doctrine and life. Therefore, these words are to be understood spiritually, and only with faith in the spirit, and not to be judged according to outward appearance, otherwise this psalm will be full of trouble and lies. For it is not found otherwise in fact, neither are these words, that it might well be called thus: Hail and blaspheme, all nations, for the wrath of God is upon you.

1) In the Wittenberg and in the Jena: "solchs"; in the Erlangen: "solche".

2) Erlanger: denies.

and fury is upon us forever, without ceasing.

73 Now behold the holy prophet and king David, how in this psalm he becomes an apostate Jew, and joins the Gentiles; forsakes Moses and all Judaism, and becomes a Gentile. For he speaks to the Gentiles and not to the Jews, and calls them to praise the Lord; that is clear and certain. Nor does he say, "For the goodness of God is upon you Gentiles," but "upon us," as if he were among the Gentiles and also a Gentile. For with the "us" he makes himself a Gentile, and not the Gentiles the Jews; or at least he makes Gentiles and Jews one people, under one God, without all law and without Moses, only by praising and glorifying. In this way he completely abolishes the old law, testifies and shows that it is not necessary to keep it; and that it was kept only as a sign of such praise, and not as a work or merit or special worship, as the Jews, Turks, Sophists and all reason think. But now that the praise itself has come to the Gentiles of the whole world, we should not esteem the sign of praise so highly, but should practice the praise itself and become vain lions, not remaining Jews or Gentiles.

74. fourth, he says, "and his faithfulness," that is, his constancy, that he has promised and bound himself by his dear word to be our God, and not to turn away his grace from us, that we may be sure of it; as he began it, so it shall remain and endure forever. This also serves so that we should not doubt his promise, even though it may seem much different outwardly, as it is said [§§ 65, 66], and seems to be vain wrath and no grace. For he will be faithful and hold fast his promise, if we will but hold fast with faith, and not fall away through unbelief or impatience. All we need to do is to wait a little, so that we can bear the cross and not grow weary or tired; for "hope does not bring to shame," says St. Paul in Romans 5:5, and "God cannot lie," Romans 3:3 and Titus 1:2. Therefore, we must learn that the aforementioned goodness and grace are not visible, but rather that they are not visible.

Cross and antagonism are visible, we feel that. And our adversaries have the outward goodness and grace, although they do not recognize it, but much more wavy they regard the secret wrath, so God threatens them through his word.

So this kingdom of grace is and remains a secretly hidden kingdom from the world, preserved in word and faith until the time of its revelation. Therefore even the wicked do not want it and do not like it, but say, Ps. 2:3: "Let us break his bands and cast off his cords"; we do not want such a kingdom to rule over us; Luc. 19:14: "We do not want him to rule over us. Why? Because such a kingdom, as said above [§ 63 ff.], condemns and rejects all their outwardly own doings and being, in which they trust, and demands that they trust only in God's grace, which is promised secretly and secretly, only through His word, and is grasped with faith. So it is that instead of praise and thanksgiving they are all blasphemers, cursers and persecutors against the dear kingdom of grace, like the foolish who fight and rage against their own salvation and blessedness until they perish, and succeed in what they are striving for, as Ps. 109:17 says: "He would have the curse, and it shall come to him; he would not have the blessing, and it shall remain far enough from him." *Volenti non fit injuria*, one cannot give anyone without his thanks.

As it is with grace, so it is with the faithfulness or truth of God. Grace appears outwardly, as if it were a vain wrath, so deeply does it lie hidden, covered with two thick skins, namely, that they condemn our evil and the world, and avoid it as a plague and wrath of God, and we ourselves do not feel otherwise in ourselves; so that Peter says [2 Ep. 1, 19] that the word alone shines for us, as in a dark place; yes, of course, a dark place!

Therefore, God's faithfulness and truth must always become a great lie before it becomes truth. For in the eyes of the world it is called heresy; so we ourselves always think that God wants to leave us and not keep His word, and begins to become a liar in our hearts. And in sum, God

cannot be God, he must first become a devil; and we cannot go to heaven, we must first go to hell; cannot become God's children, we must first become the devil's children. For everything that God speaks and does, the devil must have spoken and done, and our flesh itself also holds that the Spirit keeps us accurate and honest in word, and teaches us to believe otherwise.

Again, the lie of the world cannot become a lie, it must first become truth; and the wicked do not go to hell, for they went to heaven before, and do not become children of the devil, they must be children of God before. And summa, the devil becomes and is not a devil, unless he was God before; he becomes not an angel of darkness, unless he became an angel of light before. For what the devil speaks and does, God must have spoken and done; this the world believes, and moves us well ourselves.

79 Therefore, it is highly spoken and must be of high intellect that God's grace and truth, or His goodness and faithfulness, rule over us and are incumbent upon us. But it is comforting who can grasp it, when he is certain that it is God's grace and faithfulness; and yet can look at it differently, and can say with spiritual defiance: Well, I know beforehand that God's word must become a great lie, even in myself, before it becomes truth. Again, I know that the devil's word must first become the tender divine truth before it becomes a lie; I must grant the devil a little hour of divinity, and let devilishness be ascribed to our God; but that is not the end of the day, for in the end it is said: "His goodness and faithfulness rule over us.

80. fifthly, he says: "forever", or forever, without ceasing and without end. For this kingdom of grace shall not only endure and remain here on earth during this life, but also forever after this life, there in heaven, and shall also be established during this time, so that it shall never waver nor fall.

For though we are uncertain, and at times may stumble and fall through sin and error, yet grace does not fall and waver; neither must I seek a new grace and another kingdom, but heaven is still open, and that same kingdom of grace awaits me when I return.

(81) And do not go about, as some lie and deceive, that Christ alone has been sufficient for former sins (which occurred before baptism), but for future or subsequent sins we ourselves must be sufficient. Nor, as St. Jerome says yearly and evil, that repentance is the other plank on which one must sail when the ship of innocence is broken after baptism. Not to me the other board. The ship does not break, baptism does not cease, the kingdom of grace does not fall, but, as the Psalm says here, endures forever over us. But if I fall out of the ship, well, I will get back in. If I turn away from baptism, farewell, I will return to it. If I stray from the kingdom of grace, farewell, I will return to it. Baptism, ship and grace remain forever, and do not fall or waver because of my falling or wavering; otherwise God Himself would also have to fall, who promises to keep such grace forever.

From the admonition.

He exhorts us, and even tells us how we should serve God, and tells us to praise and give thanks. For since we have nothing of ourselves, but everything from God, it is good to reckon that we can give him nothing, nor pay or repay his grace, nor does he demand anything from us. Therefore, the only thing that remains is for us to praise and thank Him; first of all, to recognize and believe in our hearts that we have everything from Him, and that He is our God; then to go out and freely confess this with our mouths before the world, to preach, praise and thank Him. This is the right, proper worship, the right priestly office, and the dear acceptable sacrifice; as St. Peter says 1 Ep. 2, 9: "Ye are the royal priesthood, that ye should preach the virtue of him that called you out of darkness unto his marvelous light."

1) The following up to the end of ? 79 is missing in the Coburg edition.

(83) Yes, but we are smitten in the mouth over such praise; the world will not and cannot hear it. One must dare to do this if one wants to make this sacrifice to God, for it is said, "Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles. It is not: Praise men, or the world, but "the Lord", and his works or grace, and not the works of men, but rather condemn them.

(84) And with this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving is fulfilled all the worship and sacrifice of the Old Testament, that we may have none of these. For this Psalm imposes no other service on the Gentiles than praise and thanksgiving, confessing and preaching God's grace and faithfulness. Yes, even the sacrifices in the Old Testament counted for nothing, but were cursed and condemned if they were done in the opinion that one wanted to serve God with them, as if one were giving him something in such a sacrifice or work. Read about this in the 50th Psalm, v. 8-10, and Isa. 1, 2. ff., Jer. 7, 22. and many more places. For Moses did not command them, but, as he says Deut. 26:2, 10, they should not do such sacrifices otherwise than as a thanksgiving or praise, or as a sign of praise and thanksgiving; not as if they wanted to do God a great service with it, or as if he needed oxen's flesh and calves' blood, but Ps. 50:14 says: "Offer me sacrifices of thanksgiving"; and again, v. 23: "Sacrifices of thanksgiving praise me." And especially in your glorious Psalm 51, v. 18: "If thou hadst pleasure in sacrifice, I would surely offer it; but burnt offerings are not pleasing unto thee." As if to say, "If it were done by sacrifice or works, I am a king; I would find about ten florins to buy a heifer for sacrifice; but there will be another sacrifice here.

85 But because they would not leave their sacrifices, he destroyed them to the ground, and for this he prepared in all the world the right sacrifice, the sacrifice of praise, as he says here, and Malachi 1:10, 11: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I take an offering at your hand: for my name is great among the heathen, from the going forth even unto the going down; and a pure and acceptable sacrifice is offered unto me in every place" 2c. This is the sacrifice of praise, since by preaching and confessing.

nce the name of the Lord is magnified in all the world, and highly praised; for to magnify his name is such a fine, beautiful sacrifice, as he says here.

If such sacrifices are condemned by the Jews because of the false opinion that they made a work and merit out of them, what then should the sacrifices of the mass, monastic vows, pilgrimages, saintly service, and the like be valid among us Christians? since they are much worse than the sacrifices of the Jews. First of all, because the sacrifices of the Jews were ordained by God and founded and commanded in Scripture; but our sacrifices and vows are without Scripture, a mere poem of their own and the fancy of men; which alone is sufficient to condemn them. For a man is not to initiate or establish worship, nor to master or teach God how to serve Him. Secondly, in the New Testament, the thank-offering is to be the proper service, and not a work-offering. For the kingdom of grace cannot suffer that we would give, earn or pay God with our works, but it is the greatest blasphemy and idolatry, and nothing else, but denying and mocking God, because the sacrifice of thanksgiving must perish through the same work offering, and cannot remain beside it. For he who wants to earn and gain by works certainly does not think to receive anything in vain or by grace, but wants to deal with God and deceive Him; but he who does not receive by grace does not give thanks either.

(87) Yes, they say, what one vows, one should keep; this teaches both divine and secular law. Answer: Vows are of two kinds: one that one vows to God, the other that one vows to men. We can vow nothing to God, except that we will take Him for God, praise Him and give thanks for all His benefits and grace, as the holy archfather Jacob vowed in Gen. 28:21, saying, "The Lord shall be my God." As the first commandment also demands such a vow. For we can give him nothing; so he may give us nothing, that is certain, for he has given it to us before; but he would gladly be our God.

Therefore the sayings in the Psalter, and elsewhere in Scripture, of vows against God,

The sophists do not understand this, and interpret it as vows of their own choosing, when they are vows of thanksgiving and obedience to the first commandment, as the 116th Psalm, v. 12 ff. says: "What shall I repay the Lord for all his benefits? I will take the cup of salvation, and preach the name of the LORD; I will pay my vows before all his people." There you see that he does not know how to repay the Lord without preaching and thanking God before all the people, and thus keeping his vows according to the first commandment. This he calls his cup of salvation, that is, it makes him blessed; as also the 50th Psalm, v. 23, says, "Thank offerings praise me, and this is the way that I show my salvation"; and Rom. 10:10, "With the mouth confess, and one is saved." In Scripture, "cup" means to each his part. Meaning: Some want to buy God with works; I let them have their portion and their thing, that is a cup of destruction; my cup, my portion shall be to praise God, that is salvation and blessedness.

89. Wherever vows strive against this vow of gratitude, they are to be condemned and to cease; as all monastic and other vows do. For they are all done in the ungodly, damned opinion that one wants to win God with them and earn grace, and not just have or give thanks for undeserved grace. For the pope himself says: *In malis promissis non expedit servare fidem*, evil vows shall not be kept.

(90) Likewise, where a vow is made to a man, the proviso should and must always be understood, even if it is not reported, that is, if it is not against God; for against God one cannot make a vow. As if the emperor swears this and that to the pope in his coronation, and afterwards it is found that one or some of the pieces are against God, he may not absolve himself from his oath. For he never took an oath, nor did he swear in the power of his oath, for he had previously sworn to God in baptism that he would do nothing against God, but praise and glorify His Gospel and name. Against such an oath, the pope cannot demand anything from him, it has

name, as it may be. 2) Also, God has forbidden such an oath in the other commandment: "You shall not take the name of your God in vain.

91 But what I say of the emperor's oath, that I say of all men's oaths. For one cannot deny that not all oaths are good, and that it is as easy to err in oaths as in all other matters. That's why you don't have to barge in like that and rumble: Yes, yes, you have vowed and sworn, you must keep it. Yes, dear fellow, it is not enough that I have vowed; I would like to vow that I would become a Turk or a Jew. I have vowed more to God in baptism, and I owe it more to keep it than all my other vows. And where my other vows are a hair's breadth against this first vow, I will trample them underfoot, lest I deny my God or despise His grace. It is highly necessary to keep diligent and great distinction in the vows, because it is a very dangerous thing about it, and has a great appearance of worship, that even high, spiritual people can easily miss and err in this, and it is not for anyone to judge such things, as the insolent, wild minds think.

(92) I want to have led such four pieces this time out of this little psalm, and I pay attention that it is the right useful way to handle the holy scriptures, as Paul 1 Cor. 14 also praises such four pieces, which he wants to handle in the scriptures, since he says, v. 6: "Dear brothers, if I came to you and spoke with tongues, what would I be of use to you? if I did not speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophecy, or by teaching. He speaks here of "speaking in tongues," which is nothing else than reading the Scriptures orally. And yet he wants such tongues or simple Scripture to act fourfold. Not that he wants to make various meanings out of it, as Origen and Jerome, together with their equals, do with their allegories, but wants to give much in a simple sense, as I ([I] hope) have now also done here.

1) "or thank" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) The following to the end of this paragraph is not in the Coburg edition.

For prophecy in this place is called interpreting the Scriptures of the prophets concerning Christ. Teaching is called preaching faith, Titus 2:1, how he who makes us godly by grace makes us godly without merit. Knowledge is called report and distinction in outward offerings and customs, 1 Cor. 8:7 ff, which I have called exhortation here, in which I have also touched on such a report of the sacrifice and vow. Revelation, of course, is something more than allegory, namely, to meet something special in Scripture, which not everyone else can meet, who nevertheless has some of the previous three pieces, or all three.

94. 1) I do this mostly so that I may give cause or instruction to all others who need it, to seek and act on the main point of our Christian doctrine in Scripture everywhere, namely, that we must become devout, alive and blessed without all merit, by the grace of God alone, given to us in Christ, and that otherwise no other way or path, no other manner or work may help us to achieve this. For I see and experience all too well every day how manifoldly the wicked devil pursues this main thing, so that he may eradicate it again.

(95) And although the weary saints consider it an unnecessary thing to do this almost and always (for they make themselves believe that they know it almost well, and have long since learned it), yet I know well how far their conceit is lacking, and know nothing everywhere about how much is attached to this piece. For where this one piece remains pure on the plan, Christianity also remains pure and fine in harmony, and without all divisions, since this piece alone, and nothing else, makes and sustains Christianity. All the other pieces may also shine with false Christians and hypocrites; but where it does not remain, there it is not possible that some error or spirit of the rot may be resisted. I know this for a fact, and I have tried it so much that I could not move either the Turkish or the Jewish faith where I should act without this piece.

96. and wherever there are or there are bands, you have no doubt that they will come.

have certainly fallen from this main piece, regardless of the fact that they talk a lot about Christ with their mouths, and almost preen and adorn themselves. For this piece does not give rise to divisions, since it cannot be, the Holy Spirit must also be there, who does not give rise to divisions, but gives and maintains unity.

Especially when you hear an untimely and immature saint who boasts that he knows almost well that we must be saved by God's grace without our work, and presents himself as if it were a bad art in front of him, you have no doubt that he does not know what he is saying and may never know or taste it. For it is not an art that can be learned or boasted of; it is an art that wants to keep us as pupils and remain master.

And all who know and understand it do not boast that they know it all, but feel something of it as a pleasant taste and smell, which they seek and run after, wondering and not being able to grasp it or finish it as they would like, thirsting, hungering and longing for it more and more, and not being satisfied to hear nor to act; as St. Paul himself confesses that he has not yet grasped it; and Christ, Matth. Paul [Phil. 3, 12.] himself confesses that he has not yet grasped it; and Christ, Matth. 5, 6. blessed those who feel such hunger and thirst for righteousness.

99. And if anyone desires, let him think of me by this example, which I will confess herewith. The devil caught me several times when I did not think of this main thing, and plagued me with sayings of the Scriptures so that heaven and earth became too narrow for me. The works of men and the laws were all right, and there was no error in the whole papacy. Recently, no one had ever erred except Luther alone; all my best works, teaching, preaching and books had to be condemned. Also, the shameful Mahomet almost became a prophet to me, and both Turks and Jews became vain saints.

Therefore, dear brother, do not be proud, nor too sure and certain that you know Christ well. Now you hear how I confess to you what the devil was able to do against Luther, who was also supposed to be almost a

1) The section from s 94 to? 105 (incl.) is not in the Coburg edition.

He has preached, written, spoken, sung and read so much about this art, and yet he must remain a student in it, and at times he is neither student nor master. Therefore be advised, and do not say Hui. You stand, but watch and do not fall. Thou canst do all things, but see that thou lack not the art. Be afraid, be humble, and pray that you may grow in this art and be protected from the devil who is called Klügel or Kündelin, who can do everything and learns everything on the fly.

101. Now if you want or need to deal with matters concerning the law and works, or sayings and examples of the fathers, take this main piece before you first of all, and do not let yourself be found without this piece, so that the dear sun, Christ, may shine in your heart, so that you can judge freely and safely through and about all laws, examples, sayings and works, and say: Well, if there is anything good or right in them, I know it well that they are neither good nor right except for this life; for for grace and that life Christ alone is good and right. And if you do not do this, you can be sure that the laws, sayings, examples and works, with their pretty appearance and the great reputation of the person, will mislead you, so that you will not know where you are. I have also seen it in St. Bernard; when the same man begins to speak of Christ, it is because there is air; but when he is out of this piece, and speaks of rules or works, it is no longer St. Bernard. And so it is with St. Augustine, Gregory and all the others, that if Christ is not with them, they are vain worldly teachers, like the philosophers or jurists.

For this reason Christ is also called a cornerstone in Scripture, upon which everything must be built and founded that is to stand before God. But whatever is built without him and not based on him must come to nothing and cannot stand. And what is lacking now in the mobs and mad saints, but that they have left this cornerstone, and have again fallen into works? There they cannot get along, but must continue, and also out of baptism and sacrament.

(which are God's word and commandment) are vain works of man.

(103) The Anabaptists say that baptism is nothing if a person is not pious beforehand; they do not want to become pious through and from baptism, but to make baptism holy and good through their piety. That is (I mean) to say that this cornerstone is thoroughly lost, and not by Christ's grace, which baptism gives, but to become holy beforehand by itself, so that baptism gives nothing, creates nothing, brings nothing, but we bring and give everything to baptism beforehand, so that it is nothing but a mere, unnecessary sign, so that such holy people may be known; so that baptism also cannot be such a lasting sign or characteristic, so that someone may be known, but happens once, after which it can no longer be seen by anyone. This is what the devotees do with their sacrament; it does not have to make them pious or give them grace, but it shows and testifies how pious and holy they are without such a sacrament.

And what has made in the papacy such divisions, innumerable sects, sects and idolatries of all kinds of mad saints, priests, monks and nuns, but that they have fallen away from Christ, and before that have become devout by works?

For this reason St. Paul teaches the Ephesians and Colossians so diligently that Christ is our head, and that we should diligently hold on to this head, and thus remain and increase as members of one body. For the devil does not celebrate or sleep, he would gladly tear us from this head; he knows well that this piece will break his neck and crush his serpent's head, as is promised in Genesis 3:15.

But God, our dear, eternal Father, who has so abundantly enlightened us through His dear Son and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, may He also strengthen us with complete faith through His Holy Spirit, and give us strength to follow such light faithfully and diligently, and to praise and glorify Him with all the Gentiles, both with teaching and life. To him be thanksgiving and glory for all his unspeakable grace and gifts for ever and ever. Amen.

29. interpretation of the 118th Psalm.*)

Versaht 13 to 26 June, issued in August 1530.

[D. Caspar Creutziger's] preface.

This psalm, because it is one of the noblest and most beautiful, so that it was known and sung daily by the Jews and the common people, and especially speaks of the time of the New Testament and the kingdom of Christ, and thus rhymes with this present time, to teach and comfort Christians usefully, it is well worth, as the venerable D. Martinus says in the preface of his interpretation, that it is held by every Christian as his dear psalm and beautiful Confitemini and is used daily for revival and strengthening of Christian invocation and consolation. Martinus says in the preface of his interpretation that it is held by every Christian as his dear psalm and beautiful Confitemini, and is used daily for revival and strengthening of Christian invocation and consolation.

For first, it teaches us to recognize and praise God's grace and good deeds, and to thank Him for preserving the kingdom of Christ, and with it all other gifts and benefits, so wonderfully in the world at all times, especially in the face of so great, so much, constant, unceasing, and ever new growing raging and raging of the devil and his crowd, that we should also daily, and the longer the more, feel God's benefits and wonders, and thus also boast the more strongly, and sing and repeat the verse of this psalm: "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is kind, and his goodness endures forever."

For in our remembrance we should now have learned so much from our own experience and know to say that what is now still good, first of all in secular government, as peace, protection, preservation of the lands and people, so much of it still

The German people have not been able to achieve and defend this until now, nor have they been able to do so by and through human beings. For as it has hitherto stood everywhere in Germany, so it should have come to this many years ago, since 1) the devil would like to bring it about even now, that poor Germany would now long since have drowned in its own blood, and, burned by its own fire, would lie in ashes.

That would have been gladly seen by the tiresome enemy of God and bloodthirsty, murderous spirit; as he 2) recently instigated it, both with secret, murderous tricks and pieces, treason, murder, burning, and to a large extent also with impudent, public, unpunished malice, for which he also found enough evil people ready and willing everywhere, so that there is no lack of will, There has been no lack of will, of plans and of ability, and everyone must realize that what has been hindered and delayed until now has not been and is still being done by any human prudence, power or resistance, but only by God's great, undeserved grace and goodness.

And so something good should still remain and exist, now that the fire of God's righteous wrath has started and burned over Germany, and wants to be unrestrained and unquenched for the sake of the world's great wickedness,

1) Walch and the Erlangeners: that.

2) "he" is missing in Walch and in the Erlanger.

2) Luther wrote this interpretation, as we see from a note by Veit Dietrich on the 18th Psalm (Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. IV, Col. 1504), at Coburg from June 13 to 26, 1530. Luther's letter to Abbot Friedrich at Nuremberg is dated: "From the desert, July 1, 1530. On August 22, Luther sent a finished copy to him from Coburg (De Wette, Vol. IV, p. 136). The first edition was published in Wittenberg in the same year by Hans Lufft under the title: "Das schöne Confitemini, an der zal der 6XVIII Psalm Ausgelegt durch Mart. Luther. MDXXX. Wittenberg." On the last page: "Printed at Wittenberg by Hans Lufft. M.D.XXX." By the same, a new edition appeared in 1531, and another without indication of the year of printing. In 1548 Cruciger organized a new edition by Hans Lufft, and provided it with a preface. Still in 1530, a reprint was published in Nuremberg by Georg Wachter. In the collections: in the Wittenberger (1553), vol. III, p. 556b; in the Jenaer (1566), vol. V, p. 43b; in the Altenbörger, vol. V, p. 168; in the Leipziger, vol. VI, p. 506 and in the Erlanger, vol. 41, p. I. Luther's letter is also found in De Wette, vol. IV, p. 65. Walch reports in the preface to the 4th volume, p. 37 an event organized in 1719 by IVI. Joh. Christoph Crämer, which appeared in Halle. LI. Johann Feeder translated the manuscript into Latin. This translation has been transferred to the Latin Wittenberg edition (1558), fol. VII, praise 524. In the Jena edition, Cruciger's preface is printed at the end of the interpretation (1. o. p. 70b), and provided with the wrong year 1546.

This must also be done solely through his causeless kindness to his poor church, so that he will spare his own holy name and not let his inheritance be destroyed.

Rather, the fact that the knowledge and light of his holy word and a small group of his church have remained in the spiritual regime until now, have not been suppressed and taken away soon in the beginning, and still remain with us this hour, is not our or some creatures' protection, work, or merit, but his pure grace and goodness. For the devil is especially in this matter wicked, fierce, cunning, powerful, and has been industrious and eager enough to soon eradicate it, even so much persecution, seduction, sects, and lies, which he has brought upon us through his dear obedient and disobedient to God, the pope and his bunch, that if it had stood with them, it would not have come so far (as praise to God now), but would have been dimmed and extinguished at first, before it was properly kindled and lit.

And, unfortunately, the ingratitude of the world and the overpowering, wanton contempt of such high, unspeakable, divine gifts and benefits is so great and strong that God alone should have taken it away from us again for half of it, as only for this and no other reason the world has been punished before, and must still be punished at last.

Therefore, it is of great importance to us, who still have this through such wonderful goodness, that we do not add this ingratitude to other great sins, but rather recognize and praise such great immeasurable grace and good deeds from the heart through true Christian repentance and correction; not to be angry and cry out in disgrace that we are in trouble, which we, alas, well deserve, but to complain and cry out that we have angered God so much with our sins, and to boast with heartfelt confession and thanksgiving that His goodness is still far too great toward us, and as the prophet Jeremiah says in the Song of Songs, Cap. 3, 22: "It is the Lord's goodness that we are not at an end, and his mercy is not yet at an end.

Yes, here we should sing all hours and moments with this Psalm: "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is kind, and his goodness endures forever", who so graciously preserves his holy word for us against our great sin, so faithfully protects, saves and redeems his church against the ravings of the devil and the world, so that with such heartfelt thanksgiving we may provoke him all the more 1).

and moved that he would also henceforth preserve and strengthen with us such things as he has given us.

Above this teaching and admonition, the Church of God has in this Psalm its high, eternal comfort from the kingdom of Christ, wherein it has prophesied this beforehand through the Holy Spirit, that it must experience at all times in the world how the same, together with its prince, the devil, sets itself against it, and especially at the last time, the longer the more dreadful, it should be oppressed, plagued, crushed and trampled underfoot by the great tyranny and cruelty of the worldly power (as it now hardly feels enough), and in this it cannot rely on human assistance, salvation and help at all; although God gives some pious rulers or others, where she has shelter for a while, but still, against all misfortune, misery and distress, has security and overcoming in Christ, no matter how bad it may be, it goes, falls, topples, lies all over and over, and can happily sing the song of joy and this triumph, v. 18: "I shall not die, but live, and declare the work of the Lord"; as St. Paul also boasts, Rom. 8, 37: "In all this we overcome far in Christ"; and 1 Cor. 15, 57: "Thanks be to God, who has given us the victory" 2c. For we, praising GOD, know where we are to abide from the devil, death and hell, have in addition the certain promise that also the church on earth shall abide with and after us. For here is the precious cornerstone, which has been rejected by the builders (that is, the highest, noblest, and highest of the world), and yet God wants to keep it unthrown, but to keep it as the foundation and head of His whole church against the gates of hell, and has decreed that whoever rages against it must perish.

This glorious, joyful, eternal victory of our dear Savior is something that all Christian hearts, in the midst of these sorrowful last days of the world and against all terrors and temptations of sorrow and gloom, should take comfort in and heartily rejoice in, and, as this Psalm itself exhorts, keep and celebrate a daily, eternal feast of its joy in faith and spirit, in which we render to God His beautiful, pleasant services, that in our weakness, distress and anguish we call upon this our Lord and God, who enlightens us with divine grace and comfort, and has made a blessed day of eternal life and eternal joys, and cry the dear Hosanna into His ears, that He may graciously strengthen that which He has given, and thereby preserve His church. And then conclude this psalm with its **Deo gratias**, "Give thanks to the Lord," 2c. so that the beginning and the end are in unison, with eternal praise and joy.

1) Walch and the Erlanger: irritate.

We must give thanks to His unspeakable goodness, so that we do not sink into weeping and lamentation at the sight of all the evil done by the devil and the world, and especially our own sin. This is what I have said recently, to exhort devout Christians to diligent meditation on this Psalm, through this beautiful interpretation of it, so that they may

not even be hindered and put under the bench, as happens to many other good comforting writings (most of the Holy Scriptures themselves). May the eternal God and Father of our Lord Christ keep all devout hearts in His holy Word, and in eternal praise and thanksgiving for all His causeless grace and mercy, amen.

Caspar Creutziger, D.

[D. Martin Luther's attribution.]

To the venerable Lord, Friedrichen, Abbot of St. Ilgen, 1) at Nuremberg, my favorable lord and patron.

Grace and peace in Christ our Lord and Savior - Venerable, dear Lord and Patron! I would gladly show my gratitude to your love and favor shown to me, but I am, according to the world, a poor beggar. And even though I have much, your nature is such that I would not like to show you anything special with it. So I have turned to my wealth, which I consider my treasure, and have taken my dear psalm before me, the beautiful Confitemini, and have put my thoughts on paper about it, because I am sitting here in the desert so idle, and yet must rest and celebrate at times, to spare the main, with the greater work of fully translating the prophets; which I also hope to complete soon.

2 I wanted to write and give you such my thoughts. I have nothing better. Although it may be considered by some to be a great, perhaps even a useless piece of drivel, I still know that there is nothing evil or unchristian in it. For it is my Psalm, which I love. Although the entire Psalter and the holy scriptures are also dear to me, as they are my only consolation and life, I have fallen especially in love with this psalm, so that it must be called and be mine, because it has earned itself so often for me, and has helped me out of many great troubles, where otherwise neither emperors, kings, wise men, wise men, nor saints could have helped me, and is dearer to me than the pope's, the Turk's, the emperor's, and all the world's honor, goods, and power.

reluctant to interpret this psalm with them all together.

(3) But if any man shall think me strange to boast of this psalm as mine, which is common to all the world, let him know that the psalm is not taken from any man, that it is mine. Christ is also mine, yet remains the same Christ to all the saints. I do not want to be jealous, but a joyful sharer. And if God wanted all the world to address the psalm as his own, as I do; that would become the friendliest quarrel, to which hardly any harmony and love could be compared. Unfortunately, there are few of them, even among those who should do it before others, who would speak to the holy scripture or to some psalm from the heart for the rest of their lives: You are my dear book, you shall be my own little psalm.

(4) And it is indeed one of the greatest plagues on earth that the Scriptures are so despised, even by those who are endowed with them. All other things, art and books, are practiced day and night, and there is no end to labor and toil; but the holy Scriptures are left lying around, as if they were not allowed. And those who do it so much honor, since they read it once, can do it all in no time, and no art or book has ever come on earth that everyone has learned so soon as the holy scripture. And after all, they are not reading words, as they think, but genuine living words, which are not set down for speculation and high poetry, but for life and action. But our complaints do not help, they do not respect them. May Christ our Lord, through His Spirit, help us to love and honor His holy Word with earnestness, amen. Command me hereby in your prayer. Ex Eremito, prima Julii [from the desert, July 1] 1530. Martin Luther.

1) "St. Ilgen" is, as we see from other Latin letters of Luther, St. Aegidii.

The beautiful Confitemini, in number the 118th Psalm.

V. 1. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is kind and his goodness endures forever.

This verse is a common thanksgiving for all the benefits that God the Lord shows to all the world, daily, without ceasing, in all things, both good and evil men. For this is the way of the holy prophets, when they want to praise and thank God in special things, they look upon Him highly, and bring it far, praising Him at the same time in general in all His miracles and benefits. So here, because this psalm especially praises God for the highest good deed shown to the world, namely, for Christ and his kingdom of grace promised to the world and now shown, it begins with common praise and says: "Give thanks to the Lord"; for he is a hearty, gracious, pious, kind God, who always and forever shows us good deeds, and pours out one goodness upon another with heaps upon us.

2. For you must read these words: "kind and His goodness," not so coldly and crudely read, nor run over, as the nuns read the Psalter, or as the canons and choirboys bleat and howl such fine words in their churches, but think that they are living, excellent and rich words, which comprehend and conceive all and everything, namely, that God is kind, not like a man, but, who, from the bottom of his heart, is always inclined and favorable to help and to do good, and does not like to be angry or to punish, because he has to do so, and is forced and urged to do so by the unremitting, unrepentant, obdurate wickedness of men, so that where he has to be angry and punish, a man could not wait so long, but would punish a hundred thousand times sooner and more severely than he does.

3. and such kind and gracious favor he proves abundantly and mightily beyond all measure with his daily and eternal goodness, as he says here: "his goodness endures forever", that is, without ceasing he always and always does the best for us, creates body and soul for us, protects us day and night, keeps us alive without ceasing, lets the sun and the sunshine shine on us.

Moon shine to us, and the sky, fire, air and water serve us, from the earth wine, grain, fodder, food, clothing, wood and all need grow, gives gold and silver, house and yard, wife and child, cattle, birds, fish; Summa, who can tell it all? and all this the abundance and exuberant, all years, all days, all hours, all moment. For who alone can reckon the goodness that he gives one and receives a healthy eye or hand? When we are sick, or have to do without one, we first see what a blessing it is to have a healthy eye, hand, foot, leg, head, nose, fingers; item, what a grace it is to have bread, clothing, water, fire, house 2c.

If we humans were not so blind and so weary and careless of God's goods, there is certainly no man on earth who has so many goods, if it should come to a change, he would not take an empire or kingdom for it, and would be deprived of the same goods. For what treasure can a kingdom be against a healthy body? What is all the world's money and goods against one day, which the dear sun makes for us every day? If the sun did not shine one day, who would not rather be dead? Or what would help him all his goods and dominion? What would all the wine and malmsey in the world be if we were to lack one day of water? What would be all the beautiful castles, houses, velvet, silks, purple, golden chains and precious stones, all the splendor, jewelry and court, if we should be deprived of the air of a father-uncle for a long time?

Such goods of God are the greatest, and the most despised, and because they are common, no one thanks God for them, take them and need them every day as if it had to be that way, and we had every right to do so, and should not even thank God for them. In the meantime, we have to suffer, worry, quarrel, fight, and rage for money or goods, for honor and pleasure, and all in all, for that,

which could not hold a candle to the above-mentioned goods, and which may not be of such use to us in the hundredth part, but rather prevents us from the joyful and peaceful use of the common goods, so that we cannot recognize them, nor thank God for them. This is done by the wretched devil, who does not want us to need or recognize God's goodness and the rich, daily benefits; we would be all too blessed.

006 Behold, now say thou, how many are there on earth that understand this verse? True, no boy is so wicked when he sings or otherwise hears such a verse in church, he makes himself believe that he understands it exceedingly well, and has drunk it down to the ground, who has never thought of it all his life, nor given thanks for the milk he sucked from his mother, let alone for all the goodness of God, which God has shown him so innumerable and unspeakably all his life, that he has probably done more sin every hour, just because of his ingratitude, than there are leaves and grass in the forest, where God would be a usurer, and would demand an exact account.

7. Therefore, this verse should be in the heart and mouth of every man daily, yes, every moment, as often as he eats, drinks, sees, hears, smells, walks, stands, or how, where, when he needs his limbs, body, goods, or some creature, so that he remembers that if God did not give him such to need and keep against the devil, he would have to do without it; And besides, exhorting himself and accustoming himself to a cheerful heart and merry faith toward God, with thanksgiving for such his daily goodness, and saying: Well, you are a kind, gracious God, who eternally, that is, always and forever, without ceasing, shows me unworthy and ungrateful such abundant kindness and good deeds; praise and thanks you must have.

8 And this also serves to comfort us in all accidents. For we are such tenderhearted and soft martyrs, that if a leg hurts us or a little leaf comes out, we can cry out to heaven and earth with lamentations and weeping, grumbling and cursing, and not see.

How small an affliction such a little leaf is, compared to the other innumerable goods of God, which we still have in full. Just as if a king wanted to become insane, that he had lost a penny, regardless that he had almost half the world, with countless money and goods, and wanted to torture over it, veitstanzen and pestilences, God desecrate, and thunder out with other curses, as now the torturers prove their manhood with curses.

(9) Now the pious God allows such minor afflictions to befall us only to awaken us snorers from a deep sleep, and to drive us to consider the great, innumerable goods that are still available, and what would become of us if He were to turn His goodness away from us and take it away. As the pious Job did when he said [Cap. 2:10], "If we have received good things from the Lord, why will we not suffer evil?" Behold, he could sing this beautiful confitemini and verse very finely, saying, "As it pleases God, so it goes, 'the name of the Lord be praised' 2c. [He does not fall only on the evil, as we puppet saints do, but keeps before his eyes all the goodness and benevolence of the Lord, comforts himself with it, and overcomes the evil with patience.

(10) So we should not look at our misfortunes in any other way, nor accept them, but as if God were lighting a light for us, so that we might see and recognize His goodness and mercy in all its innumerable parts, so that we might think that such a small evil had hardly been a drop of water in a great fire, or a spark in a great water, so that the verse might be known and loved by us: "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is kind, and His goodness endures forever. Which in German is said no differently than this much (for I did not want to go too far from the Hebrew words in the interpretation): Oh, how faithful, heartfelt, pious Lord God you are, who always do me and all the world so great and much good! Thanks be to you 2c.

(11) For the Hebrew word Chesed, which in Greek is Eleemosyne, and hitherto in German has been called "Barmherzigkeit", but I

In German, "Güte" (goodness) actually means that which we call Wohlthat or Gutthat, as Christ Himself used Matth. 12, 7: "I delight in Wohlthat and not in sacrifice. And St. Paul, 1 Tim. 6, 2, says: "Servants should serve their believing masters all the more gladly, as they are partakers of the good deed." And Matth. 6, 1. Christ says: "Take heed to your good deeds" 2c., which we call alms according to the old custom from the Greek eleemosyne. Although the word alms has come into disuse over time, being called nothing else than a piece of bread given to a beggar at the door, it is actually called Eleemosyne, Chessed, Wohlthat or Gutthat, as God does us good, and again, we should also do one to another.

12. and the word "eternal" is not to be understood only of the goodness in heaven after this life, since there will be an eternal life, but the Hebrew word olam means, which we say in German, immerdar or for and for, it is eternal or temporal; as one speaks of a restless man: Ei, des ewigen Umlaufens, was soll doch das ewigen Umlaufen 2c.

(13) I have had to interpret and interpret such words, so that this verse may be well understood, for it is often used in Scripture, especially in the Psalter. And it is he who teaches us the right sacrifice that is most pleasing to God, for we can do no greater or better work for God, nor render any service to God, than to give thanks to him; as he himself says in Ps. 50:23: "The sacrifice of thanksgiving is my glory," or service to God, "and the same is the way that I make my salvation to be seen." Such sacrifice pleases him above all sacrifices, offerings, monasteries, and whatnot; as he says Ps. 69:31, 32: "I will praise the name of God with a song, and will highly honor him with thanksgiving. This will please the Lord more than a farrow that has horns and claws."

14) Again, just as praising God and being thankful is the highest worship of God, both here on earth and there eternally, so also ingratitude is the most shameful vice, and the highest dishonor to God, to whom, after all, the world is

is full, full, full, all the way up to 1) heaven. But God is such a kind Lord (as this verse sings) that He does not cease to do good for the sake of such ingratitude; but, as He says here, "His goodness endures forever", always lets His sun rise for and on both the good and the evil, and lets it rain on both the grateful and the ungrateful, Matth. 5, 45. Gives boys as much goods, children, power as the saints, and much more, always protects from war, pestilence, theurung and all plagues of the devil. This is and is called a divine goodness, which does not cease or grow weary for the sake of any wickedness. A human being is not capable of such goodness. For no man can suffer ingratitude, and many have become furious, mad and senseless over it, as the Histories of Timon write. It is too difficult for human nature to do good and receive evil in return.

V. 2. Let Israel now say that 2) his goodness endures forever.

(15) Then comes the sacrifice of thanksgiving, especially for the temporal government and for peace, which is a great gift from God and, of course, the greatest of all temporal gifts. For where there was no regiment or peace, we could not remain at all. Israel was the kingdom, established and ordered by God, and had commanded it to King David, as the 78th Psalm, v. 70. f., says: "He has chosen His servant David to feed His people Israel" 2c. Therefore he also gives thanks to God for such a kingdom, and admonishes everyone that they should give thanks with him; he also gives an example and a lesson to all kings, princes, lords, countries, people and subjects, that they should praise and thank God, so that there is a regiment and peace in the countries and people, each for his own, and every community, as well as Israel, for their own.

(16) For it is not always without ceasing that there is vain war, strife, tumult, bloodshed, riot, murder, and lamentation in lands, cities, villages, and all manner of craft, trade, and commerce.

1) Wittenberg and Erlangen: gen, instead of: den.

2) So in the original edition and in Luther's first Psalter edition. In the Wittenberg and Erlangen editions, this is changed according to our Bible.

del and estates of food remain, that is just as great a miracle and power of God, as that he has made the world out of nothing, and still maintains it daily. For the world is full of devils, and, as we see before our eyes every day, among the peasants, citizens, nobility, lords and princes there are so many wicked, wanton boys, who have a desire to steal, rob, lie, deceive, wage war, do harm, and cause misfortune, that with human wit and power it would not be possible to have peace for one day, and to maintain a regiment or authority, if God did not control, help, and ward off the devil here with all his might. Therefore, it is not for nothing that St. David exhorted that one should thank God for worldly peace, authority and government.

(17) And here the lords and rulers, as well as the subjects, should learn that to govern the land and the people, and to have them in obedience, is a pure and simple goodness and gift of God. For with our sword and wisdom there is nothing, as some foolish princes and lords presume, as if it were they who force the land and people with their power, or rule with their reason. And especially the Scharrhans among the nobility, and masters of the cities, they do not allow themselves to think otherwise than as if it were they in whom all power rested, and God could not advise them. But sensible lords and nobility know otherwise. And David, a crown of all kings and princes, also testifies otherwise here, and whoever does not want to believe it, let him read all histories, both in the Scriptures, and in the Roman and Gentile Scriptures, there one will find it with heaps.

In the next upheaval, God showed us clearly enough that neither power nor art rules the world, but God alone. For the very same villains who now steal His honor, boast and brag as if they had done it, were at the same time such pusillanimous rascals as I have seen my day. Now they forget God, who at that time saved them, since they so shamefully shat in their pants that it still stinks where a Scharrhans walks or stands. The chivalry had, unfortunately, at that time neither heart nor courage. And their pawing and throbbing looks at me the same, as if they wanted to defy God and try for a new riot,

that he let them see once again whether Scharrhans's or God's goodness and power hold the rabble. Well then, if one comes to shake the tree, the little hens shall tumble down to me with a vengeance. For they are ripe out of measure, and they are also beyond measure woe with the dear little peace, which God still so graciously, and, as He looks at us, with force and puny preserves.

19 However, I like to see them throbbing and pawing so proudly, because it serves to make sure that people do not forget how chivalrously they feared and fled from the powerless peasants during the uprising. Otherwise, I would have had to carve such a story in a stone or write it in a book for eternal remembrance. Now I save the cost and effort. For wherever one sees or hears such a Scharrhansen, such a turmoil is vividly painted on him that everyone must think: Dear, isn't this the one who was called Defiance Emperor? who gave up their strong castles for a straw mop and firewood, the undaunted heroes and manly iron eaters, who now thunder St. Veiten, Potzmacht, St. Quirin, St. Antoni and further, so at that time nothing but Ach and Awe could sing?

20 The Scripture says that God gives both lords and subjects, and that the temporal government is even his, as David says Ps. 18, 40, 49: "Lord, you make me subject to the nations"; and of his own people he says Ps. 144, 2: "You make my people subject to me. Here he does not boast much that he would rule his own people by force or wisdom, even though he had at his disposal the most beautiful rights and customs set by God Himself through Moses, and the prophets who had anointed and confirmed him as king by God's command. He was well aware of the power and wisdom of kings and princes among the people, where God Himself was not in charge. His own son Absalom, and after him Bichri, 1) taught him who would be king in the land. Thus also David speaks Cap. 4, 14. and Cap. 5, 18. 19:

1) Thus, correctly according to 2 Sam. 20, 1., Walch and the Erlanger. In the other editions: Sichri. To "Bichri", by the way, "son" must be added from your previous, namely Seba.

"The Most High in heaven has power over the kingdoms of men, and gives them to whom he wills"; not to whom we will or think. That is so much to say: worldly rule is a mere, gracious gift and goodness of God, which no man can attain nor maintain by his wit and strength.

(21) Therefore it is nothing to force subjects, whether peasants or citizens, to fight, for a peasant can also throw down knives and strike, as well as a nobleman, but God does it, who lets them say Rom. 13:2: "Whoever resists the authorities shall be punished. Such words do it, and God also holds over it, and must happen as He decrees. Therefore, when the subjects are ripe, as the peasants were in rebellion, God decrees that they cause rebellion or disobedience, so that they are beaten on the heads. Although the lords are also punished with such rebellion, because they are so ungrateful to the goodness and benevolence of God, they do not give Him the honor of preserving and protecting peace, obedience, justice and government without ceasing, as this verse sings, that Israel should give thanks and confess that God's goodness endures forever, that is, always and forever preserves peace and government, however ungrateful and unworthy we are; or else there should be murder and war in the lands, rebellion and disobedience in the cities.

22 And especially he now keeps peace in Germany with excellent force, however little there is of it. For it must be grasped that there is now no man among the Germans who would preserve the authorities against such disobedient and thieving nobility, and protect the lords against such disloyal and thieving subjects. There is such robbery and stealing among each other, then many strange assassins with strange practices, agitation and irritation, and yet no one makes no conscience of the fact that such things are sinful before God, that I consider our present peace and state to be hanging by a thread of silk, yes, it is floating badly in the air, only in God's hands, over and against remote wills and thoughts, and against all devils' raging and raging. For, where human wisdom and power should now govern Germany, it would lie

tomorrow in one heap. Therefore, let us give thanks and pray that God's goodness will remain with Israel forever.

V. 3. Let the house of Aaron say that his goodness endures forever.

This is a thank offering for another special piece of God's goodness, namely, for the spiritual regiment, for priests, preachers, teachers, and in sum, for the dear Word of God and for the holy Christian church. What this gift is, this whole world cannot understand or comprehend. For the fact that there is not only error, sectarianism, heresy in all the world, but that there still remains something 1) the word, faith, spirit, baptism, holy scripture, sacrament, Christians 2c., that is also not of human power nor wisdom, but pure and simple grace and gift of God. Otherwise the devil would throw it all into one heap and destroy it all. As he has almost done with the Turk and the Pope, and now with the red spirits, and a long time ago with the heretics. The world would not suffer it either, and the flesh would tire of it, God must preserve it Himself.

(24) For Aaron was the high priest, commanded to preach the Laws of Moses, and to rule the kingdom of Israel in spirit and before God; even as David had to rule outwardly over body and goods. But as little as David could rule his physical government with his power and wisdom, so little and much less could Aaron maintain his spiritual government over spirit and soul by his own wit and power, although he had for advantage in the most abundant way in the Law of Moses all that he was to teach and how he was to govern. The Holy Spirit also had to help him with housekeeping, as he experienced when Korah wanted to take away his priesthood and stirred up the whole nation against him and Moses, Numbers 16:1 ff.

25 From this you can see the great wisdom of the pope and his uncle, who first want to destroy the Christian church with their wisdom, with external laws and banishments,

1) "etwo" (that is, somewhere) put by us instead of "about" in the editions. In Latin correctly: utieubi.

without God's word, without prayer and teaching, and then defend them with worldly violence, with burning, murdering and persecuting. And they do not need God's goodness at all, but sing this verse thus: Give thanks to our banishment and sword, for their power endures forever. True Christianity preaches God's word, but does not force anyone to do so; whoever does not want to believe it, they let him go and separate themselves from Him, as Christ teaches in Matth. 10, 14 and Cap. 18, 17, and St. Paul does everywhere in the Acts of the Apostles, leaving them in command of God's judgment. But our bloodhounds and murderers keep silent about God's word, make up their own articles according to what they want, and whoever does not want to believe them must burn. This is the tender new Christianity, since neither God nor the Scriptures know about it.

But let the unfaithful go, they are not worthy to be remembered in this fine psalm. We are to praise and thank God with this verse, that he lets his word and holy kingdom come to us, and also keeps it with us, against the devil, the flesh, the world, out of pure grace and goodness, even though we are all too ungrateful, lazy, careless, and despised, and are not worthy of all things of such great treasure, eternal life. Christ brought the word himself, and we did not invent it; he must also receive it himself, we will not do it with our power and art. Christ Himself founded, established and built Christianity; He must also guard and promote it Himself; our wisdom and power, or sword and fire, will not do it. As St. Paul says in 1 Cor. 3, 5-9: "You are God's building, God's work in the field, we are the servants of it; but it is neither he who plants, nor he who waters, but God who gives it to flourish.

V. 4: Those who fear the Lord say that his goodness endures forever.

27 This is the fourth sacrifice of thanksgiving, for the rightful multitude, namely, for the elect children of God and all the saints on earth, which are the true Christians, for whose sake this psalm was made in the first place, and also speaks of the same until

to the end. For in the previous three 1) groups, as in the spiritual government and preaching office, there are many who abuse the same for their avarice, lust and honor, such as the heretics, the mobs, and our present clergy. For this reason, the ministry is nevertheless good, holy, and a divine gift, and is not condemned for its abuse, just as the whole world abuses the holy name of God, baptism, sacrament, gospel, and even God Himself and all His gifts in the most shameful way, and fears God for nothing everywhere. So, in the other bunch, the worldly regiment, which abuses several parts of such gifts for their defiance, splendor, lust, iniquity, and all will to courage, without shyness and fear of God. But nevertheless it remains God's goodness, and useful gift and benefit to Himself. And in the third group, the congregation, there is almost nothing but vain abuse, since every one of his profession, craft, art, money, goods and whatever he has, uses it against his neighbor, or does not use it for the good and benefit of his neighbor, as God would have it, and therefore gives and preserves everything. But there is no fear of God, nor shyness before men; yet God sustains them all, and is therefore to be praised and thanked.

(28) But this group fears God and is pious, and is gathered from the three previous groups. For one still finds pious, God-fearing, right bishops, priests, preachers and pastors; one also finds pious, God-fearing princes, lords, noblemen, councillors, judges, and also many a pious, God-fearing citizen, craftsman, farmer, servant, maid, 2c., no matter how few they are. Yes, for the sake of these, God sustains the former three tribes, and the whole world, and dares so much goodness and gifts to them; and if the same would do, 2) the world would perish from that hour, like Sodom and Gomorrah.

29. for the holy prophet david segregates

1) In the editions: "in the previous three heaps". We consider "the" to be a printing error. Compare K 28 and § 29 at the beginning. The Latin translation offers: in [n]psrioridus trikns orctinibus.

2) thäten - would not be there. In Latin: non ossont. Compare about this use of the word in this volume Col. 251, tz 27; Col. 668, i? 34; Col. 864, tz 157; Col. 877, 188.

They are quite different from the other three Hansen, so that he shows how they do not respect, nor fear, nor serve God, but serve themselves, and seek and have their own in this life. Above this, they persecute this small group to the utmost without ceasing, and cannot and will not suffer the same, for this reason alone, and for no other reason, except that these fear and trust God, that is, that they honor and teach God's word, which those do not like to hear or see. For "to fear God" in Hebrew actually means that which we Germans call serving God, and fearing God, serving God. Now one cannot serve God visibly and physically on earth, for one does not see Him, but spiritually, when one honors, teaches, confesses, and lives and does according to His Word. Therefore, the cross and suffering, all the misfortunes of the devil, the world and our own flesh are lifted up.

(30) Dear one, what eternal benefits may these have from God, for which they should give thanks? It cannot be the spiritual office alone, for God gives this in the third heap; nor worldly glory, honor, power, peace, obedience 2c., for God gives these in the other heap; nor money, goods, house, farm, health, wife, child 2c., for God gives all this in the first heap. There must be something higher and nobler that surpasses all these gifts of temporal, perishable life by far, far. For he speaks of it to the end, even though he speaks of the three heaps in only three verses. What is it then? He himself will say and tell it abundantly enough, namely, comfort and help in all kinds of suffering, distress and fear. This is nothing else than a beginning of eternal life, which the world in all three places (where the godly turn 1)) with all its goods, power and art is not able to give a drop. For it is a poor consolation to sing of dance, joys, goods, honor, power, art, woman and child to one in distress of death.

(31) For because they want to honor God's word and serve God, they truly have to endure and suffer ridicule from the three tribes,

1) "turn" is here in the meaning: to get lost, not to be there. The Latin translator offers: si ttmvMes veuw d'äÜLrantur et Ü68iint.

Disgrace, harm, hatred, envy, blasphemy, fire, sword, death and all misfortune, plus from the devil and his angels much poisonous, dangerous, evil malice, and from their own flesh and sin trouble and heartache enough, as St. Paul speaks [2 Tim. 3, 12.]: "All who want to live godly must suffer persecution." And Christ himself [Luc. 9, 23.]: "He that will follow me, let him take up his cross." And Apost. 14, 22. "We must go through many a tribulation into the kingdom of heaven." And the wise man, Sir. 2, 1.: "Son, if thou wilt serve GOD, prepare thy soul for tribulation."

Therefore, the good deeds of God done to this group are completely hidden from the world, and cannot be seen in any other way than as eternal wrath, punishment and plague from God Himself. And the wicked among the three groups, on the other hand, seem to be vain children of God, because they are so full and rich in the visible, temporal, manifest benefits of God. Therefore it is art and grace to see and know this secret, hidden "good deed," especially because He boasts that it is everlasting and everlasting; and therefore it costs so much and so many words, as we shall hear. For though the spirit is willing and ready, yet the poor flesh is weak and unwilling, and would rather have apparent, temporal comfort and help, and be delivered from anguish and distress. But it must be, and will not be otherwise, there is no other way to eternal life than this narrow, narrow path, which few can find, Matth. 7, 14, and only this small hand finds it. And summa, the three heaps of good deeds are this temporal life and being; this heap of good deeds is eternal life. This is the real difference.

V. 5. I called upon the Lord in anguish, and the Lord heard me in a wide place.

Here you hear where this heap lies and is. It does not float in apparent joys before the world, but fear is the name of its dwelling or lodging. There he paints for himself how it is about him, namely, that he is in various sufferings, and here he summarizes with brevity (as is proper when one begins to speak of a thing) all kinds of sufferings in one heap, and calls them "anguish"; but here he is in anguish.

Afterwards he will continue to tell and interpret it, just as I might say: "How much St. Paul had to suffer! There is still no interpretation, but it is generally indicated that he has suffered, but not yet what he has suffered. In the same way, he first indicates the comfort and help of God in a general and brief way when he says: "The Lord has heard me. This means: I always have to suffer, but I am also always comforted. How this happens and what the comfort or hearing is, he will also tell soon after.

34 "Fear," in Hebrew, reads as the narrow, as I consider that in German also fear comes from it, is the narrow, in which one becomes afraid and woe, and is immediately oppressed, pressed and squeezed, as then the temptations and misfortunes do, according to the proverb: The wide world was too narrow for me. On the other hand, in the Hebrew he says here, "in wide space"; that, just as narrowness or anguish means affliction and distress, so wide space means consolation and help; that this verse is so much said: I called upon the Lord in trouble, and he heard and helped me comfortably. For as trouble is our narrow space, which afflicts and constrains us, so the help of God is our wide space, which makes us free and joyful.

(35) Notice here the great art and wisdom of faith, that in trouble it does not run to and fro, complaining to all its ears, cursing and scolding its enemies, nor grumbling against God, Why does God do this to me? why does he not do it to others who are more wicked than I? Nor does he despair of God, who sends him such things, and therefore does not consider him angry or an enemy, as the flesh, the world and the devil enter so powerfully, but rises up against and above such things, and can see God's fatherly heart through such an unkind sight, and recognize the sun through such a cloudy, thick, dark cloud, and so on, and may call heartily on the one who strikes him and is so very angry with him.

This is art above all art, and the work of the Holy Spirit alone, known to the godly and true Christians, of which the saints of works know nothing, and meanwhile chatter about good works, none of which they themselves have ever known, nor done, nor can do.

For this art is impossible for human nature. As soon as God touches her a little with a need, she is frightened and despairs, and cannot think otherwise than that all grace is gone, and that God's wrath is against her. Then the devil helps them to be overcome 1) with all his power and cunning, until he drowns them in doubt and sorrow. Also, the annoying sight of the exuberant benefits of God in the other three heaps helps perfectly; she makes herself believe that there is only grace of God and no wrath with them. Then the stupid conscience becomes weak and sinks where help and comfort do not come from God, or through pious pastors, or otherwise through the word of pious Christians, until some hang themselves over it, drown themselves, stab themselves, or otherwise go to waste and wither away.

Therefore, let everyone who can learn learn here, and let everyone also become a falcon that may soar on high in such adversity. And know for certain at first, do not doubt, that God does not send such distress to his destruction, as we will hear later, in the 18th verse, but that He wants to drive him to prayer, to crying and to fighting, so that he may practice his faith, and learn to recognize God in a different way than he has done so far, and also get used to fighting with the devil and sins, and to be victorious through God's help. Otherwise, we would never learn what faith, word, spirit, grace, sin, death or the devil were, where there should always be peace and no temptation; thus we would never get to know God Himself. In short, we would never become true Christians, nor could we remain Christians. Necessity and fear force us to do so, and keep us firmly in Christianity. For this reason, tribulation and the cross are as necessary to us as life itself, and even more necessary and useful than all the world's goods and honor.

38 It is said, "I called upon the Lord." You must learn to call (you hear that), and not sit there with yourself, or lie on the bench, hanging your head and shaking, and with your thoughts bite and devour you, worrying and seeking how you will get rid, and looking at nothing else but how bad you are, how

1) to push - to push.

Woe be unto thee, how wretched a man thou art; but howbeit, thou foul wretch, fallen on thy knees, lifted up thine hands and eyes toward heaven, made a psalm or Our Father, and set forth thy affliction with weeping before God, lamenting and calling upon Him, as this verse teaches, and in 142. Psalm, v. 3, also says: "I pour out my prayer before Him, and show my distress before Him"; and Ps. 141, 2: "Let my prayer be offered to You like an incense offering, let my lifting up of hands be like an evening sacrifice." Here you hear that praying, offering of needs, and lifting up of hands are the most pleasing sacrifices to God. He desires it, he wants it, that you should present your distress to him, not leave it on yourself, and drag, gnaw and torture yourself with it, so that you make two, yes, ten and a hundred out of one misfortune. He wants you to be too weak to bear and overcome such adversity, so that you may learn to be strong in him, and he may be praised in you through his strength. Behold, they are called Christians, and nothing else, but vain washers and babblers, which speak much of faith and the Spirit, but know not what it is, or what they themselves say.

(39) Neither must you doubt that God sees your need and hears your prayer, and you must not pray so on the ebb and flow of the wind, for by doing so you are mocking God and tempting Him that it would be better not to pray at all, as is the prayer of priests and monks. For thou must also learn to praise the piece in this verse, "and the LORD heard me afar off." He confesses both that he prayed and called, and was certainly heard.

40 And if it should occur to you from the devil that you are not as holy, worthy and pious as David, and therefore you cannot be so sure, put the cross before you and say, "Let him who is pious and worthy be so; but I know well that I am the same creature of God that David is, and David, however holy he is, nevertheless has no other, better, greater God than I do. There is only One God, both of the saints and of the sinners, both of the worthy and the unworthy, both of the great and the small; and summa, however unequal we are among ourselves, He is nevertheless the same for all of us,

some God, who wants to be honored, invoked and asked by all. What more did the holy and worthy have than I, before they became holy and worthy? or, did they themselves become so holy and worthy? Did they not receive it as the unworthy and sinners from God before, from whom I now also seek and want to receive it, as an unworthy, poor sinner? He who gave it to them 1) also promised it to me and commanded me to ask, seek, pray and knock, Matth. 7, 7. On such a promise and commandment I kneel down and lift my eyes to heaven and ask for comfort and help. Thus he is honored as a true God, as one from whom I ask for help and comfort, which is fitting for a true God to do. Thus I will be esteemed worthy before him, and he will also show himself to be a right God, for which he sees himself kept by me, and will not let his divine honor and name remain above me alone, that I truly know. For he who does not pray nor call upon God in his distress certainly does not consider him a God, nor does he give him his divine honor, which we owe him as his creatures, of which much has been said elsewhere.

V. 6. The Lord is with me, therefore I fear nothing; what can man do to me?

(41) Then he walks in spiritual leaps and eternal joys, showing how it will be when his call is heard, and says, "It will be like this: first, he will give me comfort inside my heart, which is spoken of in this verse, and then further in the 18th verse; then he will also give help by heart, and deliver from trouble, which is spoken of in the following verse. Thus he speaks of comfort, "The Lord is with me." As if he should say, "My cry is heard in such a way that, although the distress does not yet subside, I still get a mighty, powerful, strong support who is with me and helps me, so that it becomes sweet and easy for me to bear such a yoke, Matth. 11, 29. Who is he? Oh, it is the Lord Himself whom I call upon; He fills my heart with His eternal Word and Spirit in the midst of my distress, so that I hardly feel it. For we must not, as

1) Erlanger: him.

the spirits of the wicked, that God comfort us without means and without His word in the heart; it is not possible without outward words, which the Holy Spirit knows well how to remind and inflate in the heart, even if it was heard ten years ago.

(42) From such comfort, behold, how bold and courageous he becomes, and may boast and boast, "I am not afraid," I am undaunted and undaunted, I am not in pain, I am of good cheer, and I care for nothing. For there is affliction and sorrow, which look upon me sore, and would that I should be afraid of them, and they pray for mercy; but I refuse them the figs, and say: Dear Potzmann, do not eat me, you look truly awful enough, who would be afraid of you; but I have another sight, which is all the more lovely, which shines for me like the dear sun, even into eternal life, that I do not respect you small, temporal, dark little people and angry little wind.

After that he defies and throbs the whole world with great pride and arrogance in God's consolation, saying, "What can man do to me? This is called defiance over defiance. Kings, princes and lords should become mad and senseless at this, that a poor sinner despises them so highly, and throws them all into a heap and kicks them, walks and looks over them as if nothing but straw hulls were lying there in the way; opens his mouth against them and says, "Who lies there? For do you not know what "man" means? It is the whole world, all that men are, Turkish, Tartar, Roman emperors, popes, kings, princes, bishops, lords, with all their power, wisdom, wealth, land and people 2c., and summa, what the whole world, together with its god, the devil and his angels, is capable of. They should be justly cruel; yes, before one a wretched, abandoned man should be justly terrified. He still speaks against them all: "Dear, what do they want to do to me?"

They will strangle you. What will they do after that? Perhaps they will wake you up again and kill you once more? Or perhaps they will eat the body in the flesh, the cute little bit? Even though they cannot kill, nor should they, my Lord allow them to do so.

beforehand, and tell me that he will allow them to do so, or else they will be struggling year and day, plunging knives, gnashing teeth, biting their mouths and looking sour, and yet they will hear Ps. 112:10: "The ungodly must look on, and be angry with him, and gnash his teeth, and nothing will come of it; for what the ungodly want, that need not come to pass." They insist on their power and good, that is their god and defiance; but my defiance is called: the LORD, to him will I let them rub themselves. I mean that they shall rub themselves against the cornerstone, 1) that they may stagger and be crushed, while I sing, "What can man do to me?"

For what is emperor, pope, kings, princes, and all the world against God? Isaiah says [Cap. 40, 17.], they are a marriage [XXX], that is unum sic, a little cliff, so one strikes with the finger. And in another place he saith [Isa. 33, 11]: "They go with straw with child, and shall bring forth chaff"; that is, great and excellent is their dread and terror, their belly panteth horribly, as if they would bring forth mountains, that the dread is terrible to behold, and yet is vain straw, and good fireworks; and when it is born, and well directed, it is chaff. This then is the wrath, and the fruit of their woe. It is chaff that the wind weaves. For as long as the Lord is with us, so long will we abide; and if they kill us for it, well then, they have not yet killed the Lord who is with us. But if he abide, and where he abideth, there will we abide also: as he saith Jn 14:19, I live, and ye shall live also: and afterward watch with joy how he shall deal with their straw and their chaff in the day of his great fire: and it shall come to pass, what is said, What can man do unto me?

V. 7 The Lord is with me to help me, and I will see my delight in my enemies.

(46) This may be a fine and lovely God, who not only helps in times of need, but also comforts and strengthens through His Word and Spirit.

1) Rahm sah - übel ""run. Wittenberger: rhām; Jenaer: rhom; Erlanger: Rom. See Walch, St. Louis Edition, vol. XX, 2399 8. v. Ram.

The game is not only so difficult that we can endure it, but also helps us to finally win and win, and puts an end to the game in such a way that we see more revenge on our enemies than we might have wished or asked for in the time of need. This happens in two ways: first, with grace, that those who are hostile to us, and (as the text says here, *orunt*) are at last converted, and become our friends, which is the highest pleasure and joy of all the saints on earth; on the other hand, who do not want to become different with grace in God's name, so that they have to go down with wrath in the devil's name, and still let the Christians live behind them without their thanks; as has happened to the Jews, Romans and all Gentiles before, and before King Pharaoh and the enemies of the people of Israel, and now in our times, praise God! has already happened to many, who wanted to devour us completely in three weeks, and yet now lies there, rotting under the worms, and we are still alive.

(47) Just as it will finally come to pass that the princes, bishops, priests and their companions will rage, so that they will perish and leave our teaching behind them. For if our doctrine is the word of God, then this verse is ours, and whoever takes it for the word of God shall have no doubt about it; they shall not carry it out, what they think; we shall see. But whoever does not take it for God's word, there is no power in what he experiences or dies. From the beginning of Christianity many a plot has been made by all the world, emperors, kings, lords, wise men and sages; but this verse has remained before them all, has kept the field, sings and mocks them freely and cheerfully: "I see my delight in my enemies." But the enemies, where are they? Where is their wrath? Where are their attacks? Why have they not blotted out this verse? And, where are now so many attacks that the pope with his clergy has lost now at ten years one over the other? But the best is, that they have hard foreheads, and do not consider, that they have so often missed, and have praised and sung Hui in vain, so that they hardened, at last completely fulfill this verse, that nothing more remains there. As the Psalter abundantly testifies in many places.

V. 8, 9: It is good to trust in the Lord and not to rely on men. It is good to trust in the Lord and not to rely on princes.

(48) He spoke of the comfort and help that God gives in the next two verses, but here he speaks of the comfort and help of men and mocks them; indeed, he speaks as if he had mercy on the wretched people who rely on men for comfort and help without God. For it is a miserable, uncertain comfort to stand on people who are not even sure of their lives for a moment, as Isaiah says. And David Ps. 146:3, 4: "Rely not on princes, nor on men; for they cannot help: for their souls must depart, and they return to the earth; then are all your counsels lost." And this is quite true, that one should not rely on holy men and pious princes, much less on tyrants and despots. For the pious, God generally likes to take away soon, so that the attack and comfort that stood on them falls away, and lets evil tyrants live long, as Solomon says, so that the faithless in God become all the more hardened in human comfort.

When Duke Frederick of Saxony lived, the noble prince (who should not be forgotten), both ecclesiastical and secular tyrants consoled themselves at his death, saying: It is a matter of two eyes, if they are closed, so is Luther's heresy. They have had nothing more certain in their lives than their own prophecy; they hold it in their grasp, like the fiddlers. For they did not think otherwise, that our doctrine was based on Duke Frederick, and that our comfort and help was human comfort and princely help. They took this from themselves. For just as they, despairing and apostate from God, put all comfort and help on princes and lords, so they thought that we also did so, because they knew no other comfort or help. Nor have I ever heard that any of them have let it be known that their consolation was in God, but all their crying, throbbing, pawing and defiance has so far been the emperor, the princes, the lords, and they brazenly write it out in public for the praiseworthy benefit of God.

They know their holy faith, which they have in God. Yes, behind them!

50 So they still go along in such confidence, and all their thoughts, words, counsel and suggestions are nothing else day and night, but how they want to dampen us by force; they comfort themselves no more than that they see how much they are, and how little we are. But that they also call upon God and ask for help, they do not even think of; they do not need him for that, they can do it well without him. It is enough for them to say, "We will do it this way and that way, we will do it this way and that way; then they will certainly have it, and they will not lack it. For how could God manage that so many mighty, wise people should be lacking? You may think it is not possible; they are far too wise and too strong for Him.

051 When Pharaoh the king pursued after the children of Israel by the Red Sea, he would not have looked to God to say with one word, O LORD God, give counsel and help; but: I will draw my sword (he said), then they are already dead. But, of course, he did not miss by a hair's breadth, so that on the morrow he lay in the Red Sea, drowned with all his people, and not one of them escaped. This is the end of human comfort and princely help, where God's comfort and help are despised.

52 Therefore he says here twice, It is good to trust in the Lord. As if to say, "Men cannot comfort or advise, so princes cannot help or save. For men do not have the word and the spirit to comfort and sustain a sorrowful heart; neither do princes have the fist to help a miserable man or to subdue his enemies. But it is God alone who has both words of comfort and the fist of help, no matter how great and diverse the distress and enemies may be.

53 Experience also shows this. For if a man is truly sorrowful in his heart, tell me, how will all emperors, kings, princes, and the whole world's power, art, goods, and honor comfort him? They are all less than nothing, even against a small challenge of a small, daily sin, where God's word does not give advice and comfort. So also, if a deadly disease

If there is danger of death, what good is all the world's power and force? And even if they could help, what would that be, if it is all uncertain, and they themselves die daily, and yet must finally give up their help and comfort to death?

All this is seen before our eyes, yet the devil is so strong and does not let us believe it; and it remains such a strange, great art, that one should not trust in men and not rely on princes, and the whole world is no different, and remains no different, but to trust and build on men and princes, that is to despair of God and to trample His first commandment underfoot. All false gods can be trusted without this one, the right, faithful God.

55. Therefore the prophet not only comforts us, but also almost laments the calamity in these two verses, that such poor miserable people are, and have no God; but emperors and princes (who are not for a moment sure of their lives) are their gods, in whom their hearts trust, comfort, defy and throb, and the same openly and insolently, that they also boast of such shameful idolatry, as the nonsensical Philistines boasted of their mutilated Dagon, of whom they should nevertheless be ashamed to the highest degree. But it serves them right, they want to have it that way, that they also leave an eternal shame behind them, like the Philistines [1 Sam. 5, 6. Ps. 78, 66.].

(56) This would be the time and the place for me to give proverbs and examples, both in and out of the Scriptures, of how those who have relied on men have always perished and been crushed. How the dear prophets preach here and call all together against their people Israel, who always and always made a covenant, now with the Egyptians, now with the Assyrians, now with this king, now with that one, so that they would not have to rely on God, but would trust in men; and yet they were always miserably destroyed. The pagans themselves write many stories, fables and histories about it. And I wanted to bring a sack full of examples, just for the time of my life, only to the German lands, since I have seen, both in high and low classes, what alliance, company, and comfort may have on people.

and how shamefully it has been destroyed. And this verse remains true: "It is good to trust in the Lord and not in men or princes. And again, Ps. 146, 3: "You should not trust in princes or in men, for they do not help" 2c. As the wise man also says, Sirach [Cap. 2, 9]: Whoever trusts in men will fall; God also does not suffer it, should not and cannot suffer it, for it is idolatry that wants to take away his divinity.

57 Therefore let him who would begin a good thing see to it that he begins it from God, and venture on His goodness, and by no means on human comfort or help; again, fear not men, nor the whole world. For this verse will not lie: It is good to trust in the Lord; and Jesus Sirach, Cap. 2, 10. 11., says: "Look, dear children, among all the generations of men, and you will learn that no one has ever been put to shame who has trusted in the Lord." And Ps. 25:3: "All they that wait upon thee shall not be put to shame." But whoever does not want to, nor can, dare to trust in God, let him rather wait, and do not look at anything that is divine and salvific, for human comfort.

(58) When I first attacked the indulgence, and all the world shut out their eyes, and thought it was too high, my prior and subprior, moved by the clamor, came to me and were very afraid, and asked me not to lead the order into disgrace; for the other orders were already leaping for joy, especially the preachers, 1) that they were not alone in disgrace; the Augustinians must now also burn and be bearers of shame. Then I answered, "Dear fathers, if it is not begun in God's name, it will soon fall; but if it is begun in his name, let the same be done. Then they were silent, and so far, if God wills, it will continue until the end. Amen.

59 I have heard say of the fine Bishop Frederick of Magdeburg, who was a Count of Beichlingen, not long before this time. Against him was a prince of Saxony, Her-

Frederick, willing to fight as his enemy, sent a scout to the bishop's court to see how he was arming himself and putting up a defense. He came home to his prince cheerfully, showed him that the bishop was not preparing anything, all things had already been won. Then the prince asked: "What did the bishop say about the war? He answered that he said nothing more, because he wanted to go and wait for his office, visit monasteries and listen to poor people, and wanted to let God fight for him, who would however conduct the war. When the prince heard this, he said, "If the bishop says so, let the devil fight against him in my stead," and he left the war pending, fearing to fight with God. Then behold, who helped the bishop so soon and so easily, and turned the prince's heart so completely? Only the name of the Lord, the impotent little word. God accomplishes such great things so quickly and powerfully and easily. I will keep silent about the hostile examples of how those who relied on men fell; there are too many of them before our eyes every day.

60. Because God is such a Lord that He allows the pious to suffer hardship and the wicked to rage, but does not leave the pious unsoled in their hardship, and finally overthrows the wicked and helps His own, He wants to have kindly admonished and enticed us here, with His example and experience, through these verses, that we should learn to trust and hope in God, as the first commandment teaches; For such is good, fine and wholesome, here temporally and there eternally, for which God is the most beloved sacrifice, and the most beautiful service and honor done.

61 Again, he wants to deter us and faithfully warn us that we should not take comfort in men and princes, defy, hope and insist, as the world and the devil's children and servants do, who despair of God and fall away against the first commandment. All this is evil, shameful and harmful, here temporally and there eternally; in addition, God has done the greatest dishonor, dishonor and robbery.

2) In the original and in the old editions: "he"; probably a misprint instead of: "the". The Latin agrees with the reading we offer.

1) That is, the Dominicans.

62. But lest here a spirit of the mob should lead and suck from this beautiful rose of the holy prophet his poison and teaching that one should strike the princes dead, or despise the authorities and not be obedient, because David sings here, one should also not trust in pious princes, whom he here calls Nedibim, that is, as Christ himself interprets it, *benefici vocantur*, "gracious lords", that is, who by their office are ordained to do much and great good by God; as is said enough elsewhere. Princely office and worldly rule are to be used and enjoyed for physical nourishment, protection and peace here on earth, for which God has ordained it. But one should not trust, defy, hope and insist on them; just as we need other temporal goods, money, cattle, house, farm; but one should not trust, hope, defy them. Trusting and needing are two different things; trusting belongs to God alone; needing belongs to the creature.

V. 10-13 All the nations surround me, but in the name of the Lord I will cut them down. They surround me, they surround me, 1) but in the name of the LORD I will cut them down. They surround me like bees, and dampen like a fire in thorns; but in the name of the LORD I will cut them down. They thrust me to fall; but the LORD help me.

In these four verses he tells who they are that persecute him and where the trouble comes from that he said above [v.5]. And herewith, as with his own example, he wants to prove mightily the fine teaching and admonition, since he has called us to trust in God and not in men. As if to say, "I will show you my own example and experience, so that you may see how good it is to trust in God and beware of trusting in men. Behold, all the heathen, with great power, diligence, anger, wrath, cunning and deceit, have attacked me at every turn; but they have not yet accomplished anything with all their raging and blustering, but by all this they have proved and confirmed that GOD

1) So has the original edition of 1530 and so must also be read according to the Vulgate and according to § 66. The editions have changed the text according to the Bible; only the Jenaer has kept our reading, but has inserted "allenthalben".

comforts, sustains and strengthens the pious in all distress by his Word and Spirit, and does not forsake them, and also destroys and disturbs the adversaries, so that at last he also helps us out of distress and saves us by deed.

64 Whether the prophet is actually speaking of himself or of Christianity, because he says, "All the Gentiles surround me," as some argue here, is not in my mind. It is an example that is the same for all saints, whether they were before or after Christ. But now I take it as spoken in David's person and of his people, as he addresses Israel and Aaron in the beginning of the psalm. For all the heathen around and about the Jewish kingdom were exceedingly grieved, seized it, and also oppressed it on every side where they could, especially in David's time. But David again did not miss it, confidently threw himself around, and struck at them, but by God's command, until he overpowered and defeated them with God's help, as he says here: "In the name of God I will smite them" 2c., and thus sets himself as an example to all believers, who also suffer such things, but shall finally be victorious; but now no longer with the sword, but by the word and sword of God, for Christianity does not fight with the sword of the flesh.

(65) Now behold, how great is the trouble, and how manifold are the enemies. First of all, he says, "All the Gentiles," for they are exceedingly many and mighty compared to the small multitude. But it must be that all of them set themselves against God and His word, so that it may be clearly known how the defiance and comfort of men is nothing against God, as the other Psalm also says, v. 1: "The nations rage, and the kings set themselves against Christ" 2c. All other doctrines and gods can be suffered, so that no nation nor country sets itself against them, but when God's word comes, then all the world is uplifted, there is raging and raging at all ends, and it is said, "They surround me." "Me, me," he says; it is I alone whom they must surround. The Romans had all the gods of the world, several hundred, which they could tolerate; but they could not tolerate the one Christ. Just as now all the teachings of the monks and priests, how shameful they have been, although they have maltreated all the world to the ridge, in addition body and soul plagued and tortured.

They still let it all go. But now the word of God comes, and teaches peace and grace, and delivers them from their drudgery, then everyone must cling, blaspheme and persecute. Why? They have nothing to do (he says), because they have to surround me, me who has the word, the devil has to cling to me; as Christ says John 15:19: "If you were of the world, the world would love your own; but because I have chosen you from the world, the world hates you."

(66) Secondly, not only are they many, but they also need their power, and do it with all their might, earnestness, diligence and labor, and attack it. For he speaks twice in the eleventh verse: *Circumderunt me, circumderunt me*, "they surround me, they surround me." With this he shows how they persist, continue, do not cease, do not tire, drive and drive without ceasing, do not stop until they perish. Even if they are often absent, they do not turn back, always one new advice over the other, one premeditation over the other. For the devil, their God, who thus drives them, does not let them celebrate or rest as long as they are able. For what such heathen rage against Christ and his word, that is the devil's doing; otherwise it would not be possible, if it were only a matter of men, that they would soon grow tired and weary, especially when they felt that they had often started and failed in this way, and had become disgraced, as always happens to such persecutors.

Thirdly, they are not only serious, active and restless, but also bitter, hateful and poisonous in the most severe way, which also makes them so restless. And again, their lost restlessness and futile raving, that they do not accomplish so much, or ever so soon, as they would like, but are often absent, and have to abandon and drop many a counsel and noble idea, that makes them even more fierce and violent. The more they are absent, and the longer they are consumed, the more foolish they become, so that they should be admonished to repentance, and so one vice is always sharpening another, and one vice is sharpening another. Restlessness makes them angry, and anger makes them restless, and so they must go to the devil.

Service run along, storming and rumbling, as he drives them and chases them, they cannot desist nor endure. That is why he speaks here: "They surround me like bees." A bee is such an angry, fierce little animal: when it is enraged, it sticks its sting into its enemy and leaves it inside, regardless of the fact that it leaves life over it, or that it can never make honey. For if a bee loses its sting, it does not die, but it no longer makes honey, and has thus shamefully lost its noble, sweet craft through its anger and revenge, and must henceforth be a water bearer and supply the other bees with water, so that it may also eat, and is now a servant in the house among the other bees.

(68) So the enemies of Christ are also so vengeful and hotly poured out that they will perish before they do any harm or take revenge; yet they lose all grace in eternity to do good and become true Christians. They also scrape and drink with their fists, and thrust their sting into the Christ, thus cooling their little mill with their eternal harm and destruction, both here and there. So the 8th Psalm also gives them the name, that it calls them, v. 3, avengers, and says: "Out of the mouth of the young children and infants you have prepared a power, so that you execute the enemy and avengers." But it is a strange vengeance, not human, but evil devilish, because they have no cause for it, since the word of God does them no harm, brings and gives them all good, grace, peace, salvation, life and bliss. But, as I said, such vengefulness comes from the fact that they are absent and cannot do what, how and when they would like to. This prevented and stopped restlessness and malice inflames them to such devilish revenge.

69 Fourth, because they must be ashamed in their hearts that they are not only so often absent, but also feel that they have no cause for their anger, rage and vengeance, they go on, preening and adorning themselves, inventing a cause, namely, that God's word causes turmoil and is harmful to the common peace. When they have invented this cover of shame, they must no longer be so ashamed, whether they are

They often lack and have no cause; they can now boast and say, "The devil thus hinders them in their godly, holy conduct," and for this reason they henceforth have great, just cause for anger, raging, murder and vengeance, as they are now vain children of God, doing great divine service in keeping peace and unity, punishing the rebels and blasphemers. Poor Christ, then, is shamefully and wickedly deceived; for how can he know that they invent such things, and are such knaves and husks in their hearts, because they turn such a fine nose at him, and weave such a beautiful brazen beard? He must surely make them saints, he is so simple-minded and foolish against these over and above but exceedingly clever people. Just as the council of Jerusalem, when they had undertaken to kill the Son of God, and had often failed to do so, and had become more and more angry about it, and yet had no cause for such wrath or for such a thing to be done, Mr. Caiaphas began, and also made God a nose and a brazen beard, and said [John 11:49, 50]: "Ye know nothing, and think nothing: it is better that one man should die, than that a whole nation should perish." Where was God going to take the poor man? He had to wear the nose and the beard, and badly believe that it would be well done and his highest divine service that his son was crucified without all guilt, so that peace and unity would remain in the land, and his people would not even perish, as Mr. Caiaphas foretold and prophesied to him.

70 Therefore he says here in the 12th verse:- They dampen or extinguish, like a fire in thorns. If a fire breaks out in the field in the hedges or fences, everyone should run to help extinguish, quench and save it, as against a common plague and damage, because otherwise it could seize the grain in the field, vineyards and gardens, and ruin the land and people. Moses also gave the Jews their own right to punish and atone for this fire that rises in the hedges or thorns around the fields, vineyards and gardens, according to Exodus 22:6. The same is true of the fire that rises in the woods or in the heath and copses. The one who runs toward it does a praiseworthy and good deed. Such work (he says) is a good thing.

they equal their raving and raging, so that if someone teaches God's word, he has (as they say in German lands) burned the Rhine (which in Hebrew means burned the fences or hedges), then one must run and fight, kill such heretics and rebels, and thus defend and save his people and his honor to the dear God. Thus, it is not only a good, but also a praiseworthy and honest thing to murder and rage against God. And where it fails, one has double honor: as that they are holy martyrs in such good work, and must suffer great hindrance from the devil. This helps and is a deliciously good recipe to make a hardened, unrepentant heart.

(71) Now you know who they are, who cause the pious to fear and be troubled, and to afflict, so that they must cry out and pray to the Lord. 001 Many are they, even all the heathen with all violence, that is, the whole world with all devils. 002 They are fierce, earnest, and turbulent, and neither slothful nor idle. 003 They are also bitter, hateful, and fierce, that there is no hope of mercy nor of atonement. 004 And last of all, they are the greatest of saints in heaven, and the most pious of men on earth. Dear, what is forgotten of this painter, who herewith so painted the persecutors? But which piece among these four is not enough to cause a Christian pain and suffering, to make him afraid and anxious? With the Christians these four pieces go counterintuitively. 1. for they are single and few. 2. they are weak, and their actions are impotent. 3. gentle and patient. 4. the worst heretics in hell, and the most harmful people on earth.

How then will a Christian resist such enemies? Where is the victory he can hope for? According to appearance, it is all far and away lost. For there they are above, as has been said. But here stands our defiance, as he says, "In the name of the Lord I smite and bruise them." This he answers to all four pieces, and with one kind of weapons he will meet them all. This is too much, the poor hope is truly too great, that he not only wants to be saved and defended, but also to force all the world, together with its violence, wrath, holiness; yes, force it, smash it.

He wants to smash them and do the same with the same pieces. This should make the devil angry, and all his angry nobles, if they knew it. What then is such a rifle or sword, so that you, poor courtier, would do such a thing? I would like to hear the Carthaginians or singers, it must be a worthy piece! I will tell you (he says), it is called: "the name of the Lord". Well, this is a Karthaun made of twisted paper, a Scharnützlein 1) (say Scharrhans). Come on, let it be paper, you shall know it well in time. Dear, how do you load this rifle? or how do you shoot it? how does it burst? what kind of bullet does it carry?

First of all, we all know that God is almighty, and all the nations are nothing against Him, as the first commandment teaches. That is one. Then it is impossible for him to put his name to shame, just as it is impossible for him to abandon his divinity. For he said in the other commandment that he would not let his name be taken in vain, or that he would not let it go unpunished. This is the other. Now if we honor and call upon his name, but our enemies blaspheme against us: Dear, whom do they persecute or blaspheme? Is it not God Almighty Himself, and His name? Do you see the guns loaded? Since God Himself does not want His name to be blasphemed, and we also cry out and ask that His name be sanctified and honored, do you not think that such a prayer would set fire to the cans? The bullet, however, may be the Turk or some other wrath and plague of God that brings death and destruction. Then it will burst, that here a prince, there a bishop, here a lord, there a priest, here a disciple, here a monk will lie, crying and lamenting, that [it] will resound in heaven, 2) and on [the] earth. That is what they want to have. The Jews, who also would not desist, he thus shot with the Romans, the Romans with the Goths.

and Wends, the Chaldeans with the Persians, the Greeks with the Turks. He will also find us Germans a bullet that will hit us and not miss; for we have the upper hand and have not yet stopped.

74 Therefore it is said that we Christians smite the heathen, because God does it by our calling, for His name's sake, which we have and honor with us. For whoever accomplishes something through another's counsel, hot words or pleas, is rightly regarded as if it had been done by the hotter, counselor and bitter one; so that we can say with a clear conscience: I will smite all the world, that is, I will ask God with firm faith to sanctify His name, and I have already done so, for He will hear me (says the Psalm in verse 5). So also David, who struck his enemies with his bodily sword, did nothing by the power of the sword, as he also abundantly shows Ps. 18 and in more places, but that he honored, sanctified and called upon God's name, and prayed for his God's glory; so his sword must have been more than a hundred thousand swords. "The name of the Lord does it, if he is called upon and honored. For where he is not called upon, he does it nevertheless, but there we have nothing of it, nor does it apply to us, because we do not suffer over it and call upon it. Just as he otherwise punishes the heathen, since he does not redeem anyone among the pious, as when the Romans beat themselves among themselves and carried out God's punishment, and the like.

75 Yes, you say, you praise the name of the Lord; but that part also wants to have sought the name of the Lord, and to do worship with it, as said above. For here lies the knot, which part of the Lord's name rightly means, otherwise your speech is nothing. I answer the first, "Let every man examine his conscience, and God will not be deceived. Then, lest men be deceived, look at the fruit, and you will know whether the tree is good. For we in our part have no comfort in men, nor can we have it; we are too few, too little, and too weak, and must walk and stand in fear, sorrow, and trembling, and with all humility ask and entreat both God and man. So we murder no one for their

1) Scharnützlem - a container for storing all kinds of rarities. The Latin translator offers: *oneullus 6mpor6tian8, ant aromatarius, ant elrarta, c^ua involvitnr tNu8*, that is: a merchant's bag, or em spice packet, or wrapping paper in which one wraps incense.

2) galten - resound.

We teach, take nothing from anyone, let everyone believe what he wants, do not force them, do not push them, let the authorities judge and punish riots, discord, discord, have no thought nor counsel to harm anyone, but fight them all where and how we can, teach and keep peace most diligently, but suffer murder, blood, poverty and persecution most horribly. Which are signs of a right spirit, and agree with this Psalm and all Scripture.

76. But that part have their comfort and defiance on men, and their help with emperor and princes; stand secure, without worry and without driving, are not afraid of us nor of anyone, do not call upon God, much less humble themselves before men, but drive along in pride, security and arrogance, force and drive to believe what they want, murder, plague, take, chase away without all mast; In addition, day and night, they plot and strive in the most meticulous way, as they may only do harm and harm, inflict trouble and damage, and cannot nor will not have peace, as all this is clear in the daytime. This and the like cannot be signs of a good spirit, and goes against all Scripture. For it will not be proven for a long time yet that Christians should murder, or even kill with judgment, or do so with counsel and help; it belongs to worldly authorities in worldly matters, as the pagan Gallion also says in Acts 18:15. 18, 15. The Christians have a different judgment, sentence and punishment, Matth. 18, 15. ff.

In addition to this, our diligence is that a wild, lewd, and desolate life is punished and not suffered; public immorality, fornication, lechery, cursing, and the like (in praise of God) cease, the married state is held in honor, and the dear youth is finely trained in God's word and Christian discipline with all diligence. On the other hand, one can see what shameful, lewd, impudent avarice, hopeful behavior is going on among the papists, with all kinds of great annoyances in the whole world, most of all among the highest. There is neither punishment nor shame; there one neglects the noble youth, and lets them miserably perish, one teaches them neither to believe nor to pray. And those who are in the place of the teachers cannot themselves be ashamed.

It is also that they should learn from us such things and take examples; so that it remains after.

(78) But this is the greatest of all: We are not ashamed to freely confess publicly and to give glory to God, where we have erred before in many a misbelief and abuse against God's word, and we do not hide and adorn our iniquity. But there is only silence, recovery, deceit and adornment; and all their cries, thunders and blasphemies against us are directed to this end, that the beams in their eyes may not be seen, and only the splinters in ours may be shown and mastered, although they themselves know and hold that we teach the very best in many things. For they know well how shamefully they have acted and committed treachery with the mass, how abominably the pope, cardinals, bishops, canons, parish priests have plagued the world with all immorality, avarice, fornication, and hopefulness, yes, with false and erroneous doctrines of indulgences, purgatory, pilgrimages, and such public abominations. All this they cover up, and there is not one who would confess such things to God's honor, or punish them. Just as the preaching monks cover up their virtue to God, they go about in sure impenitence, thinking neither to atone for it nor to amend it, but only to us they are heated: they shall be dead, and their shameful, erroneous, evil nature shall remain free and right. This is called sin in the Holy Spirit. With such fruits everyone shall know how they mean the name of God in earnest. Let this be said of the three, 10. 11. 12. verses.

79 The thirteenth verse now says, what such heathen, who are so many, so mighty, so wrathful, so holy, mean by their surrounding and persecuting, how far they bring it; and says, "They push me, that I should fall. That is, they want badly, I should lie down, and be purely off with me, so that nothing remains standing, with roots and with everything uprooted; as Jeremiah forewarns his people, Jer. 11, 19. Now, that they push me, drive me out and chase me away, that is done by force; nevertheless, they bring it so far. But God still protects me from their thoughts and sets a goal for their intentions, so that they will not do it,

what they have in mind. They can push, but they cannot cut. They can torture, but they cannot spread. They can push, but they cannot force. They can hinder, they cannot defend. They can bare their teeth, but they cannot eat. They can murder, burn, execute and drown, but they cannot dampen. They can chase away, rob, take, but they cannot be silent. And summa, something they shall do, but their heart's opinion they shall not do. For there is the purpose: "The Lord help me." Who are they that can do anything against the help of the Lord? It shall be said, "The word of God endureth for ever" [Isa. 40:8], unless God Himself and His name endure not, let them become foolish and foolish alike.

V. 14. The Lord is my power, my psalm, and my salvation.

80) On such miracles of God, so that he comforts and helps his own, he sings here with joy a beautiful, short song of thanksgiving and praise, in defiance of all his persecutors, scorn and mockery, and in praise and honor of God, that they must hear, without their thanks, that his God, and he himself, nevertheless remained, and still live, above and against all their raging and raging. And this is the same verse that Moses, Book 2, Cap. 15, 2, sings in his song in defiance of the drowned Pharaoh; likewise, Isaiah, Cap. 12, 2, sings it, so that it seems that the verse was a common song and proverb among the people of Israel; and it is also still worthy of being a common song or a glorious saying among us, as often as we are delivered from hardships. As we have sung many times before, but will sing more as time goes on, and will sing to the end, amen.

81 And behold, how finely he grasps it all, and divides it into three parts: "The Lord is my power, my psalm, my salvation. The first is that he trusts purely and completely in God, that God works, speaks and lives everything and everything in him, and that he does not insist on his own strength, ability, reason, wisdom, holiness or work; he wants to be nothing, so that God may be everything in him and do everything. O this is a high song,

and a strange song on earth, which neither defies nor relies on any man or prince, on any power of the world, wealth, friends, alliance, support, wisdom, work, comfort or help, but only and loudly on God, even against himself, against all the power, wisdom and holiness of the world; this is sung even higher, God alone shall be its power, comfort, defiance. The other is that he cannot keep silent about such things, makes a psalm out of it, sings it, preaches it, teaches it, confesses it, and says it of GOD as he believes. For faith does not leave it alone. He confesses what he believes, Rom. 10, 10. The world cannot suffer this, nor hear that its power, wisdom, holiness, works, counsel and deeds should be condemned and be nothing, that the salvation and comfort of men and princes should be rejected and despised, that its teachings should be vain and false. Then the singer of this psalm must stand up and suffer that his psalm is not a praise of God, and his sermon not the glory of God, his confession not the truth, but blasphemy, heresy, error, lies, sedition, and seduction of the world, that no more shameful song has come on earth, and nothing more harmful has been preached under the sun; and quickly with him to the dungeon, to the fire, to the land out, cursed, damned, and God to great service killed, burned, drowned, hanged, or otherwise murdered, and all misfortune laid on. Then follows the third, that God is his salvation, who finally does not abandon his singer and his psalm. He helps out, whether by dying or by living, and gives the victory; and should all hellish gates and all the world become mad and foolish, then God becomes our salvation at last, so that we and our psalm or teaching remain, and all adversaries go to ruin. For "God's word remains forever", no raging, nor blustering, nor blaspheming, nor condemning will help.

82] Therefore he holds it finely against each other, as if he should say: The power of that part is themselves, the power of men and princes, there they trust in, as is said above 76]; but my power, in which I trust, is the Lord. But what the power is, that is also the psalm, praise, glory, honor and thanksgiving. Therefore they must praise, honor and glorify their gods, namely, themselves, men and princes, as they then

1) That is, shutting people up (Walch).

do so publicly and insolently, and thus steal and rob the highest good work and worship, namely the sacrifice of thanksgiving, from the right God, and blasphemously turn it over and sacrifice it to mortal, wretched men. Mock now, whoever can mock, the wretched, stubborn people who have such wretched gods, and must show their worship to a maggot sack and bellows, since they are not helped by anything. For as their power and psalm, that is, their confidence and praise, is lost, so there is neither salvation nor victory, but vain error and destruction. For "in men there is no salvation," says the 146th Psalm, v. 3. But my victory and salvation is the LORD, who helps and can help. "Salvation" is to be understood here as victory or help, so that God finally gives us the victory in His name and word, and helps us to prevail and remain, since the persecutors perish and become ashamed.

V. 15. They sing with joy of victory in the tabernacles of the righteous.

So far he has spoken and testified about his example, how God has helped him; now he goes on to the common example of all the saints, and says: it happens to all the righteous that they are persecuted for the sake of God's word and name. But because they trust in God and do not rely on men, he helps them to sing such a song and praise God. Moses sang like this with the children of Israel, Ex. 15, 1. ff. Deborah sang like this, Judges 5, 1. ff. 5, 1. ff. So sang Hannah, 1 Sam. 2, 1. ff., and so on, all with one another. It is One Voice 2c., that is, when I watch all the saints, especially in the New Testament, it is the same with them; so I also hear in their tabernacles such a voice of joy, that is, a joyful song and song of salvation and victory, how God helps them. That we may agree in singing, praising, and giving thanks, just as we are also of one mind in believing and trusting in the same God, and are also of one mind in suffering all things. In the same way, St. Peter 1 Ep. 5, 9 comforts us: "And know that your brothers in the world have the same suffering.

If it were not a special consolation to know and see that all the saints are like us, St. Peter would be the one to say it.

have not so attracted, and this psalm also does not speak so diligently of it. For it must comfort and strengthen a heart when I see how St. Paul and the apostles had just the word, God, faith, the cross, and all the same that I have; as one says: *Gaudium est miseris, socios habere poenarum*, it comforts the miserable when they do not suffer alone. This is first of all a very fine word, where it is really needed, and leads here among the Christians. For an unheard affliction frightens a man very much, that he should feel himself thus excoriated, 1) and suffer a special thing in the sight of all men. Again, it is comforting when many suffer in the same way; there is not such a terrible thought as if he alone had been rejected 2) and rejected. But it is even more comforting when they all suffer in the same way and no one remains free, as is the case among Christians.

But the psalm does not speak of the suffering of the righteous, but of victory and joy, so that the consolation may be all the stronger when we see them before us in a joyful image as the redeemed, and we may be sure that it will come to us and all the righteous that we also sing so joyfully. He nevertheless indicates the suffering of the righteous with the little word "salvation" and then with still more words, in which he gives to understand that the righteous have suffered honestly and have fought in the battle of faith. Otherwise it would not be called salvation or victory, if there were not such a joyful song. But now, just as there is always much suffering (as St. Paul [2 Cor. 1:5] says, "that the sufferings of Christ are much in us"), so there is always much salvation and victory, singing and rejoicing, praising and thanking, where the righteous are. So I think it is obvious to almost everyone that the righteous in Scripture are called the believers who trust in God, Rom. 1:17: "The righteous lives by faith. But he who trusts in rulers and men is unbelieving and godless; therefore there is no song of joy of salvation and victory in their tabernacles, but shouting, cursing God, reproaching, blaspheming, and then weeping and lamenting,

1) ausschelen - to segregate, to put out of the loop (bow in the wreath).

2) abfeimen - to skim off.

and gnashing of teeth in the hull. What then is the song of the friars, and the song of praise of the righteous in their 1) tabernacles? So it reads:

V. 16-18. The right hand of the Lord keeps the victory. The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord keeps the victory. I shall not die, but live, and declare the work of the Lord. The Lord chasteneth me, but delivereth me not unto death.

This is the joyful song of the righteous, and so all the saints sing in their tabernacles, that is, where they are together and dwell. And especially the righteous in the New Testament, when the gospel is preached in the churches from time to time of the great miracles wrought by Christ. And mark well that it is a song, not of the ungodly, but of the righteous, that is, of the faithful. For he that believeth not, but trusteth in men, cannot sing it, understandeth not a word of it, though he chatter it with his mouth; as in churches and monasteries this beautiful psalm is so shamefully howled at and profaned every Sunday. For their heart sings thus: The right hand of men proves strength, the right hand of princes goes up high. For they must sing as their beak is grown, kind does not leave kind.

(87) "Singing" is not only the sounding or shouting, but also any sermon or public confession, by which God's work, counsel, grace, help, comfort, victory and salvation are freely praised before the world. 2c. For such singing is meant by the Holy Spirit, where now and then in the Psalter and in the Scriptures it is said of singing, songs, psalms; as above also in the 14th verse: "The LORD is my power, my psalm, and my salvation." For God wants to be praised, extolled, honored, and known by us in His works and miracles, as faith does, and cannot be silent, it must say and teach what it thinks of God and knows how to honor God and teach people, as the 116th Psalm, v. 10, says:

"I believe, therefore I speak." And if he did not lead out, speak and confess, it would not be a true faith; although he must suffer from it, that he is cursed and persecuted, as soon follows in the same Psalms: "But I am greatly humbled." On the other hand, he has a helper who is his salvation, as the 14th verse above says, that such persecution must not harm but promote salvation, so that God is defied and blasphemed, that he must help, and the righteous are compelled to call upon God and pray; so it is fine and right.

From the 14th verse, interpreted above [§ 80 ff.], one can almost understand the whole song of the righteous; For it is of one mind with the same, namely, that the righteous in their gathering do not sing, teach, preach, confess, or boast of man's works, holiness, wisdom, nor of princes' power, consolation, help, as the hypocrites, the pious, the self-growing saints, and the godless, apostate Christians do in their gathering, but reject and despise such stinking, own holiness, and such loose help and consolation of men, princes, and the world; But they live by God's grace, works, words and power shown in Christ, which is their preaching, singing, praise and song. For this verse sets: *Dextera Domini*, the right hand of the Lord, to diligence 2) *contra dexteram hominum*, against the hand of man, so that one should know that nothing is valid before God that the hand of man is able to do. The work of man does not serve righteousness, does not eradicate sin, does no good work, knows and understands nothing of the truth and right nature of salvation; much less can it advise and help out of troubles, journeys, death and hell, nor give life and salvation.

But "the right hand of God" is the one that does it. First of all, it proves power, of which power it is also said above [§ 81] how it comforts, but here it wants to be interpreted a little more narrowly. But this is the power of God, that whoever believes in him and trusts in him is thereby saved from all sins, evil, and evil.

2) "to diligence" with diligence, intentionally. *JmLaMnischm* *ktuāioso*, data opca. In the Jena, probably because this idiom has not been understood, in the margin is the conjecture: "more" before "to vleis".

1) In the editions "their". Only in Latin is the plural.

We have been delivered from conscience, sorrowful heart, error, lies, deceit, darkness, and from all the power of the devil, and have been brought to grace, righteousness, truth, knowledge, comfort, and to the right light, so that henceforth God is our power, and we do not live in ourselves, but in Him, and He does and speaks everything in us. But these are all great, mighty, divine works and miracles, of which none of man's reason, strength and power understands anything, let alone that they should help anything, but rather lead away from it by their false comfort, teachings and promises, and drive the longer the further into error; although before the world their thing has great, excellent appearance, and lets itself be seen as if it were vain power, and soon helps to heaven. But he who believes in God's power sees that it is the work of men and a false, loose, vain deceit, and he who trusts in it builds hell for himself.

90] On the other hand, "the right hand is exalted," rises high, is on top, and is always victorious, that is, the faithful not only have the comfort of God, that they are free from sin and righteous before God, but also have help from Him, so that they are finally victorious against the devil, men, and the world, and are thus delivered from death, hell, and all evil, without the help of men or princes. It is also of no use, and is not able to do such high, great works and miracles, but the high, glorious hand of God therefore goes in such high miraculous works, and helps out of all troubles. But if we die over it, then it brings us all the more to life, which has no end. For this right hand is too high; neither tribulation nor fear, neither sword nor hunger, neither angel nor prince can pull it down, Rom. 8:35. sf. If then we cling to it with firm faith, as all the righteous do, we are just as high, and neither tribulation, nor fear, nor ruler, nor devil, nor fire, nor water, nor any other creature shall oppress us; the victory shall be ours. Again, he who hangs on the arm of man, and takes comfort in the hand of princes, must descend into the abyss of hell, even if he were above the clouds or sitting in heaven.

91. thirdly, he repeats the first part again, saying, "The Lord's right hand.

The hand shows power; for a good song may well be sung twice. It is also the way of all men, when they are cheerful or merry in their hearts, that they repeat a word two or three times, and cannot say it enough; what they encounter must hear it. So it is also said here that the dear saints are so heartily glad and merry over the great miraculous works that God does for them, that he redeems them from sins and death (that is, from all evil, both body and soul), that they start their song over and over again with joy. As if they should say: The hand of the Lord proves power; indeed, the hand of the Lord proves power. So nothing can help, nor comfort, but only God's right hand. Oh, what do the wicked do, who stand on their own, relying on their own work and wisdom, relying on men and princes for comfort and help.

But whoever desires to do so, may draw these three pieces to the three works of Christ, that he has redeemed us from the law, sin, death, as Isaiah on the 9th, v. 4, and Paul 1 Cor. 15, 55. relate the same three. But, as I have said, there is the art of knowing how these words are all spirit, and must be heard, sung and understood with faith. Otherwise, whoever with reason, according to the bodily eyes, wants to have his mouth open here and gape, will be annoyed and see the contradiction in the righteous and the saints, namely, that they must be nothing but the devil's own before the world; no one less righteous and holy than they, no one greater sinner and heretic than they, no one more deeply condemned to death and hell than they; that their right hand must be called the devil's right hand. But again, their counterparts, who alone are holy and blessed, there goes the right hand of God with power, and soars, conquers, and lies above, for they are God's children, and no one else.

The 17th verse of this song: "I will not die, but live" 2c. touches and confesses the trouble from which God's hand helps the saints, namely death. They truly feel death when they come in death's way, and isn't the flesh a sweet little truffle when death comes under eyes; so death doesn't come, it also brings sin and evil.

with them. Therefore, it can be seen from this that the saints must be martyrs, for they must be in the throes of death, wrestling and struggling with death. If it is not done by tyrants and the wicked with fire, sword, prison and similar persecutions, it is done by the devil himself; he cannot suffer the word of God, nor all those who keep and teach it.

He afflicts them, whether in life or in death. In life, he does it with the high temptations of faith, hope and love against God; there he can so besiege and storm a heart with fright, doubt, despair, that it shuns God, becomes hostile and blasphemes, that the wretched conscience has no other choice than that God, the devil, death, sin, hell and all creatures are one thing, and all have become his eternal, unrelenting enemy. The Turk, not yet an emperor, can never storm a city with such force 1) as the devil can storm a conscience.

When he is dying or in his deathbed, he can also do it, if God gives him room. There he is a master with blowing out sins and showing God's wrath. It is a strange, powerful spirit that can cause such fear and build such hell from a small sin. For this is certainly true, that no man ever sees his true capital sins, such as unbelief, contempt of God, not fearing, trusting, and loving God as he should, and such sins of the heart, where the right knots are inside; nor would it be good for him to see them. For I do not know if there is any faith on earth that would stand before it and not fall and despair. Therefore, if God gives him room for the more serious sins, he will soon give you hell and damnation, because you have had one drink too many, or slept too lazily, so that you become ill from great pleasures and sadness: You will be sick with great pleasures and sadness, and you will die of sorrow.

96 And, what is worse, he shall take thy best works and put them into thy conscience, so shamefully destroyed and damned that all thy sins shall not trouble thee so much as they shall trouble thee.

now do thy best works, which are indeed good; but now wouldst thou have done great sin instead of such works. And with this he seeks that you should also deny them, as not having been done by God, so that you should blaspheme God; then death is also not far away, yes, hell as well. But who can tell all his art, how he can make sin, death and hell? It is his craft, and he has practiced it for more than five thousand years, and can do it all too well for a master. He has also been a prince of death for a long time; he has certainly tried it often and practiced it well, as he should teach a poor conscience a little bit about death. The prophets, especially the dear David, have well felt and tried, for they lament, teach, and truly speak of it, as if they had often been there, now say of the gates of death, now of hell, now of the wrath of God.

Now, come what may, we hear here that the saints must wrestle with the devil and bite with death, if the persecutor creates war 2) or pestilence and other illnesses and dangers of life. In such a battle, however, the best and closest thing to victory is to learn to sing this little song of the saints, that is, to deny oneself and cling to the right hand of God. In this way a great mischievousness happens to the devil, that he finds empty straw to thresh; namely thus: I will be nothing; all my power shall be the Lord, as it is said above [§ 81]. If I do this, I am purely emptied of myself and all that is mine, and can say: What do you see, devil? do you seek good works, and to reproach my own holiness before God? Ever, I have none; my power is not my power, the Lord is my power. Rather, call me in the hand, or count money out of empty: bag. But do you seek to accuse my sin? I have none either. Here is the power of the Lord, which you may sue until you are full; I know neither of sins nor of sins.

2) "War" was added by Walch and included by the Erlanger; in all other editions it is missing, also in the Latin. The Latin translator has translated "schaffe" by "ocasioninnoit": there is now the occasion of the persecutor, or pestilence 2c.

1) Walch and the Erlangers: "Gestalt".

nor of holiness in me; nothing, nothing do I know but of God's power in me.

I say it would be fine who could thus leave himself and mock the devil with the empty bag, just as that poor landlord mocked the thief whom he caught in his house by night, saying, "Oh, you foolish thief, will you find something in here in the dark of night, and I can find nothing in there in broad daylight? For what will the devil do when he finds such a living soul that will not answer him for sin or holiness? There he must leave all his art, both sin blow out and good works desecrate, and is pointed to the right hand of God, which he must leave with peace. But if thou fall from this song, and he seize thee in thy sins or good works, and confess to him 1) his disputation, that thou wilt watch and hear him; then he shall judge thee according to his desire, so that thou shalt forget God with his right hand, and forsake all things.

99. But, as we have heard 35 ff.] we have heard, it is an art to deny oneself. We have to learn it, because we have to live, as well as all saints before us, beside us and after us. Therefore, as we still feel sin, so we must also feel death. And just as we must struggle to be rid of sins and cling firmly to the right hand of God, which proclaims His word to us, so we must also struggle with death and the prince of death or the officer of death, the devil, until we are rid of it altogether. For, behold, as this verse indicates, the devil or persecutor also presses on the saints with death. But what do they do? They turn away their eyes, yes, even themselves, empty themselves completely, and hold on to the hand of God, and say: I do not have to die, as you devil or tyrant pretend, you deny; I will live, for I will not speak of my works, nor of the works of men, I know nothing now of myself nor of my holiness, but the works of the Lord I have before me, I will speak of them, I boast of them, I rely on them, I am the one who is holy.

is the one who helps full of sins and death. If you can overthrow these works, you have overthrown me.

100 Thus this verse summarizes the above-mentioned two pieces in the 6th and 7th verse, "comfort" and "help", so that God may benefit the pious and righteous. For here you see how the right hand of GOD aligns the heart and comforts in the midst of death, so powerfully that it can say: "Even if I die, I do not die; even if I suffer, I do not suffer; even if I fall, I do not lie down; even if I am disgraced, I am not disgraced 2c. This is the consolation. Further, of the help he thus says, "But I will live." Is it not a marvelous help that the dying man lives, the suffering man rejoices, the falling man rises, the disgraced man is in honor? Just as Christ also says John 11:25: "He that believeth in me dieth not, though he die, yet shall he live." In the same way St. Paul speaks 2 Cor. 4, 8, 9.: "We are afraid, but we do not despair; we suffer, but we are not forsaken; we perish, but we do not perish" 2c. These are all words that no human heart can understand.

And here you see that this comfort and help is eternal life, which is the true, eternal good pleasure of God. This is what the whole psalm reveals. For since he separates the pious multitude from the three multitudes, and yet gives to the same three multitudes all that is in this life on earth, namely worldly dominion, spiritual rule, and the goods, benefits and customs of all creatures, it is necessary for this small pious multitude to have the benefit of another life, namely eternal life, since the three multitudes grant him and do not leave him their benefit of this life. Therefore this comfort must be the eternal comfort, and this help the eternal help. And what can it be otherwise in himself, because he boasts of the Lord himself, above and apart from all the goods of princes and men, which they have? For the Lord is an eternal good. So everyone can count on it, where the heart feels a gracious God, that there must be forgiveness of sin. When sin is gone, death is also gone, and there must be comfort and assurance of eternal righteousness and life; this cannot fail.

1) Thus the Wittenbergers. Jenaer: in; Erlanger: ihm in. The reading of the Wittenbergers is correct, because "gestehen" is construed either with the dative and genitive or with the dative and accusative.

Therefore let us notice here in this verse a masterpiece, how powerfully he puts death out of his sight, and wants to know nothing of dying nor of sins; again, he forms life so firmly before him, and wants to know nothing but life. But he who does not see death lives forever, as Christ says John 8:51: "He who keeps my word will never see death." Thus he sinks into life, so that death is swallowed up in life and disappears completely; this makes him hang on the right hand of God with firm faith.

Thus all the saints have sung this verse and must sing it to the end. But we see it especially in the dear martyrs, who die before the world, and yet their heart speaks with firm faith: I will not yet die, but live 2c.

104. and here we are to learn the rule that where in the Psalter and in the Scriptures the saints thus deal with God about comfort and help in their troubles, that there certainly eternal life and resurrection of the dead are dealt with, and that such texts all belong to the article of the resurrection and eternal life, yes, to the whole third part of faith, as of the Holy Spirit, of holy Christianity, of forgiveness of sin, of the resurrection, of eternal life. And everything flows from the first commandment, when God says [Ex. 20, 2]: "I am your God" 2c. This word gives the same third part of faith powerfully. For since they complain that they die and suffer misery in this life, and yet take comfort in another than this life, namely God Himself, who is above and apart from this life, it is not possible that they should die altogether and not live again forever. Not only because God, in whom they cling and take comfort, cannot die, and so they must live in Him, but also because God cannot be a God of the dead, who are no longer anything, but, as Christ says, He must be a God of the living and not of the dead. Therefore they must live eternally, otherwise he would not be their God; nor could they cling to him if they were not alive. Therefore, death remains no more than a sleep for this multitude.

If it is true that they live in God, it must first be true that they have forgiveness of sin. If they do not have sin, they certainly have the Holy Spirit who sanctifies them. If they are holy, they are the true holy Christian church, and the small group, and rule over all the power of the devil, so they must rise again and live forever.

Behold, these are the great and high works of the right hand of the Lord. What are the works of all men and princes, on which all the world builds and defies? They are cobwebs (says Isaiah [Cap. 59, 6.]), which neither serve to clothe nor to adorn, without that the false, mad gnats and flies, the reckless souls, are caught therewith and strangled forever. Now such saints do not live in that life alone, but begin it here in faith; and where there is faith, there is also eternal life begun, and the texts in the Scriptures about faith also belong to all the cancelled articles. For of faith there is nothing everywhere in the three heaps of this life, since the ungodly have this life the most, and faith also cannot hang on or cling to anything that is valid in this life, but breaks out and clings to that which is above and apart from this life, that is, God Himself. But that the saints begin such eternal life here, and yet live in death, this verse testifies, saying, "And I will tell the work of the Lord." He who is to preach the work of the Lord must be alive; even though they are dead, their spirit and blood preach, just as Abel's blood speaks against Cain, Gen. 4:10, and Hebr. 11:4 says that Abel, who died, still speaks through his faith.

(107) And this is the most grievous and vexatious verse to tyrants and murderers of saints, as I know of scarcely any in Scripture, that the dead saints, whom they think to be finely curved and subdued, have first of all to live, and to speak. Krodenteufel 1) It is not good to argue with the saints when they are

1) So in the Wittenberg and in the JMMt Erlanger: Krotenteufel. In Latin it is expressed nRM. Perhaps: Krotenteufel (?) or: Kraue 1 "en Teufel! (?) It is an exclamation of scorn against the tyrants Like: Yes, behind!

First of all, after death, they want to begin rightly the very thing for which they are killed, and after that they do not want to cease or desist for eternity, and they also want to be unkilld and unsilenced from now on, but to tell the work of the Lord forever. The pope has burned John Hus and many saints, now recently also Leonhard Kaiser, and many others; but how dreadfully he has done it and kept them silent, so that their blood is now always crying out against him, until he has lost all his power, so that he must now go begging, and call upon foreign authority, as emperors and princes, which he previously trampled underfoot by his own power. If they did so now, 1) the poor beggar would long since have been eaten by moths. However, even such beggar's help helps him little, and he is finally abandoned, and Johann Hussen must let his master remain.

The 18th verse is also a masterpiece in this song, and needs a rhetoric art, which is called, confutatio, tapinosis, interpretatio [refutation, diminution, interpretation), and speaks: "The Lord chastises me well, but he does not deliver me to death. What is this? He has boasted, "I will not die, but live." Thereupon flesh, world, men, and princes speak, and would make him soft and feeble: Is not this called died, when thou art burned, beheaded, drowned, strangled, damned, cast out? I mean, you should feel if this is called a life. Where is your God now? Let him help you. Awe yes, Elijah will come and take you away. He answers, remains firm, and comforts himself thus: "My dear, it is not dying, it is only a fatherly rod; it is not anger, it is the fox's tail; it is not seriousness, he chastises me thus, as a dear father chastises his dear child; it hurts a little, and is not vain sugar, but it is a rod; but it does not kill, but rather helps to life. Well, this is a good interpreter, and a strong confutatio, who can make a salutary rue out of the word "death"; the Holy Spirit and the right hand of God must teach the art. For it is extremely painful to blaspheme, to mock, to make fun of the head

1) Compare Col. 1191, § 28.

2) as the Jews did to Christ on the cross. Flesh and blood do the opposite, make death and hell out of a salutary rod, because it wants to despair and despair so soon, where it also wants to lack one bread; that does not interpret itself well. 3)

But much greater art is he that can sing this verse, when the devil doth such abuse that death is there; as he did to dear Job, and to other saints much. He can make a heart think of death in such a powerful way, not badly, as a man says, you will be burned, drowned, 2c., but can blow it out, how a terrible, horrible, eternal thing death is, and drive God's wrath with it, and press and push it with powerful thoughts into the heart, that it is untrustworthy and insufferable. Here, then, it is truly up to a good interpreter to overrule and overcome the devil with this verse, and say: Nevertheless it is not death, nor wrath; nevertheless it is merciful chastening and fatherly punishment; nevertheless I know that he will not deliver me up to death, and yet I will not believe that it is wrath, and because all the devils in hell said it in one heap; yes, even if an angel from heaven said it, let it be accursed, and if God himself said it, yet I would believe that he tempted me like Abraham, and acted so wrathfully, and yet would not be serious; for he does not revoke his word. It means: He chastises me like this, but he will not kill me; I stand by it and do not let it be taken away from me, nor interpreted, interpreted or interpreted differently.

He feels death, but does not want to feel it, and should not be called death, but holds on to the gracious right hand of God; does not deny that God sends him such death, but he has one mind with God, that they both do not want to call it death, nor let it be, but should be the father's ruth and child punishment. Well, these are all high words, which are not in men's or princes' hearts, nor can they enter them, as St. Paul says in 1 Cor. 2, 7. 8.

2) disrespect - to be disrespectful, to blaspheme.

3) The meaning of this sentence is: This does not want to be interpreted well. The expression "interpret" goes back to the word interextatio.

of the secret hidden wisdom of God, which no prince of this world knows". Let this be said this time of this beautiful song of the dear saints. Follows:

V. 19. Open the gates of righteousness for me, that I may go in 1) and give thanks to the Lord.

How? Has he not hitherto given thanks through the whole psalm, and been vain in thanksgiving? What then does he ask here, to open the gates, that he may give thanks? It is all spoken in the person of the dear fathers in the Old Testament, who heartily longed for the kingdom of Christ and the revelation of the Gospel, as he prophesied about it in the next song, and thus wants to say: Oh Lord God, that I also would be among the multitude, where one will sing such a song about the works and benefits of Christ, and would have to help give thanks, praise, preach! Oh how joyful I would be! Oh, who will open the gates for me and help me in, where first of all the right, free, joyful thanksgiving and praise are to be found! But now it is all still closed, and the gospel and Christianity not revealed, just as the 42nd Psalm, v. 5, also says: "I would gladly pass over with the multitude, and go with them to the multitude of God, in the tone of praise and thanksgiving, among the multitude that celebrate." So also Christ says to his disciples [Luc. 10, 23. 24.]: "Blessed are the eyes which see that ye see, and the ears which hear that ye hear: for I say unto you, that many kings and prophets would gladly have seen that ye see, and have not seen it; and hear that ye hear, and have not heard it."

So this verse is a fervent prayer for the kingdom of Christ and the gospel, and that the heavy burden of the law of Moses may cease, of which Peter says Apost. 15:10: "Which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear." He calls the New Testament "gates of righteousness" in the Hebrew way, because gates are called town halls, schools, synagogues, judgment houses, and such public places, where one holds public meetings in front of the community, as Proverbs 31:23: "You are the people of the Lord.

A man is honest when he sits in the gate among the rulers of the land"; and the same is found now and then much in the Old Testament. Therefore, the gates of righteousness are nothing other than the church districts or bishoprics, where the offices of Christianity are publicly performed, such as preaching, praising God, giving thanks, singing, walking, giving and receiving the sacraments, punishing, comforting, praying, and everything else that belongs to salvation. For there sit the rulers of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, that is, pastors, preachers, bishops, teachers and other pastors.

He calls them "gates of righteousness" in contrast to the Old Testament, because in the New Testament there is only the teaching of forgiveness of sins, of grace, of faith that justifies and sanctifies, and nothing at all of works of the law or of one's own works. But the law in its gates and schools drives on works and makes sinners, increases sin and wrath, as St. Paul says Rom. 4, 15. and Gal. 3, 11. 12. and cannot help to righteousness, so that it may well be called gates of sin or unrighteousness. For law is not grace. But since grace alone makes righteous, it is impossible that law should make righteous, but must make sinners, and provoke wrath, Rom. 3, 20. 28. Therefore also St. Paul 2 Cor. 3, 6. 9. may boldly call the law of Moses "an office of death," and Gal. 2, 16. "an office of sins"; and 1 Cor. 15, 56. he says: "The law is the power of sins, and sin the sting of death." So even now our teachers of works (of which the world is full), almost all bishops and clergy, belong to the Old Testament, and have also closed these gates of righteousness again, and made gates of sins out of them. And they are still nowhere as good, because they weigh down and confuse the consciences with false, unnecessary, invented sins through the vain law of men, as Christ and the apostles prophesied about them; but still there remain some gates of righteousness.

V. 20. Here is the gate of the Lord, where the righteous enter.

(114) Just as he separated the Old Testament from the New in the next verse, and raised it to the level of the New Testament.

1) "da" is missing in the Erlanger.

He also separates it here from the same after the service, when the Jews were very proud and could boast of nothing but their holy temple and their sacrifice and incense, for which the whole priesthood of the Levites was appointed. Here, here (they said [Jer. 7, 4.]), at Jerusalem, "there is the temple of the LORD", that is the right gate, where one must enter to the LORD, sacrifice, burn incense, serve God and become pious. For since he does not call it bad gates, but "the Lord's gate," and speaks as of one gate, he means the gate of the temple, where the Lord dwelt specially (as in his palace or council house), and where worship was most highly and most extensively practiced. But it is untempered and unburned and unoffered; here is the right temple, the right gate, the right worship, the right sacrifice, which is called the peace offering, of which he says in the next verse, and will say more hereafter.

(115) Even so there went in unto the gate of the temple many wicked men, hypocrites and sinners; but here, unto this gate of the Lord, go in all the righteous and holy to serve God. For no one is or can be in the Christian church or a member of Christendom unless he is a true believer, that is, righteous and holy; as the article of faith testifies: "I believe a holy Christian church." But he who is not a true believer, nor holy and righteous, does not belong to the holy Christian church, and cannot enter this gate of the Lord, nor can he pray, give thanks, praise, or serve God, nor does he know God, even if he lives among Christians in a bodily way, or even if he has an office among Christians, as a pastor, preacher, bishop, or even enjoys the sacrament outwardly; as also 1 John. 3, 6. says: "He that abideth in him sinneth not: but he that sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." And again v. 8: "He that committeth sin is of the devil."

And this is the article condemned in the praiseworthy Concilio of Constance, together with this verse and the whole of Holy Scripture. For John Hus confessed at that time that

1) "rechte", which is also expressed in Latin, is missing in the Erlanger.

If the pope was not pious and holy, he could not be a member, much less the head of the holy church, even if he had the office inside; therefore he must burn as a heretic and be cursed. But much more cursed is St. Peter, who calls them 2nd Ep. 2, 13. "disgrace and vice" of the holy church. If he were alive, the devil would enter him with these holy murderers. And John also, who freely says [1 Ep. 3, 8.], "He that committeth sin is of the devil." But they oppose this, and say, "If the pope, bishops, and all of them alike sin greatly, yet they are not of the devil, nor of his synagogue, but are of Christ and of God, members and heads of holy Christendom. Yes, they are members of the church, just as saliva, snot, pus, sweat, dung, urine, stink, germs, leprosy, glands, and all the pestilences of the body are members; the same are also in and on the body; yes, like stains and filth, which the body must bear with great driving, toil, and unwillingness."

(117) Now I hope that almost everyone knows that whoever wants to boast about a Christian should also boast about himself as a saint and righteous person. For a Christian must be righteous and holy, or is not a Christian, since Christianity is holy, and all Scripture calls Christians holy and righteous, as this verse does, and is often called so in Daniel, Cap. 7:27, and that such is not a hope, but a necessary confession and article of faith. The hypocrites in the papacy, with their false, blasphemous humility, boast that they are sinners, do not want to be called holy, and yet boast that their estates, orders, rule and life are holy, and also sell their works for holiness. Although they do not lie in this, that they consider themselves sinners, when they said it with sincerity of heart, when they do not; but they lie against themselves; they are sinners before God, and all their things are wrong. But they do not want to have this, but to be holy, and yet to humble themselves as sinners with their mouths; this is a twofold lie and blasphemy against God.

118 But we should know that we, as Adam's children, are condemned sinners in our own right, and have no righteousness of our own.

have holiness. But because we are baptized and believe in Christ, we are holy and righteous in Christ and with Christ, who has taken away our sin and graced, clothed and adorned us with his holiness. So the whole Christian church is holy, not in itself, nor by its own work, but in Christ, and by Christ's holiness, as St. Paul says Eph. 5:26, 27: "He hath cleansed them by the bath of the word of life." He who is afraid to boast and confess that he is holy and righteous, does so as if he said, "I have not been baptized, I am not a Christian, I do not believe in Christ, I do not believe that Christ died for me, I do not believe that he bore my sin, I do not believe that his blood has cleansed me or can cleanse me; in short, I do not believe a word of what God has testified about Christ and what all Scripture says. But what kind of man is this who thinks or speaks such things? What Turk or Jew is such a desperately wicked man? Zero think and believe certainly all those who want to become pious and blessed by works, like the monks, priests, with the whole papacy; because they deny Christ, says St. Peter 2. ep. 2, 1. and Paul Gal. 6, 15.

(119) Besides this, he touches all other outward respect of person, that in Christianity there is no respect of person, but whosoever believeth and is righteous entereth in at this gate, whether he be Jew, Greek, man, woman, virgin, married, bondman, bondwoman, rich, poor, king, prince, noble, commoner, peasant, strong, or weak. For the Jews boasted that they were Abraham's seed and had the law, as if for that reason they should be next; just as now our clergy want to be the best, and the nuns special brides of Christ. But it is said that the righteous enter here, monks and nuns do not enter, they become righteous and Christians first. The kingdom of Christ is not in outward ways and beings, says Christ Luc. 17, 20. and it is not necessary to say here [v. 21.], "Behold, behold it is there; inwardly it is in the heart." But it is also hard to believe that such is true, and is also one of the damned heresy articles.

V. 21. **I thank thee that thou hast humbled me, and art my salvation.**

These are the sacrifices and services that are practiced in the New Testament, in the gate of the Lord, by the righteous and Christians, namely, that they thank and praise God with preaching, teaching, singing, confessing. And these sacrifices are two: one is our humility, of which David says Ps. 51:19: "The sacrifices of God are an afflicted spirit; God, an afflicted and a sorrowful heart you do not spurn. This is a great, because long, daily, and eternal sacrifice, when God punishes us by His word in all our works, and leaves our holiness, wisdom, and strength to be nothing, so that we must be guilty and sinners before Him, Rom. 3:23. He presses after the word, and terrifies the conscience, and afflicts it with all kinds of afflictions, so that we grow weary and stale after the old sinful Adam, until our pride, comfort and confidence in our doings and knowledge are all dead; which is accomplished at the end of life. Behold, he who can suffer, endure, hold fast and persevere in this, and praise and thank God in this, as one who means it heartily well, behold, he sings this verse: "I thank thee that thou hast humbled me." He does not say, the devil humbles me, but, you, you, it is your gracious will, for my good; without your will the devil would probably leave it.

The other sacrifice is when God, on the other hand, also comforts us and helps the spirit and new man to increase as much as the flesh and old man decreases, gives us the longer the greater and richer gift, and always helps us to conquer and prevail, so that we may rejoice before him and in him; as he says Ps. 50:15, 14: "Call upon me in trouble, and I will help you, and you shall praise me. Offer sacrifices of thanksgiving to your God, and pay your vows." Whoever does this, sing this verse: "I thank thee that thou art my salvation", helper and savior. This is also an eternal, great, daily sacrifice with the righteous in the gate of the Lord. And herewith he rejects and sets aside all the sacrifices of the Old Testament, which were images and figures of these sacrifices of thanksgiving, and both may have been done by the pious and the wicked. But these peace offerings no one can do, except only those who have made them.

Pious, righteous, or Christian. This can also be seen in the experience of how the Jews raged in the apostles' time, just as our works saints do now, that their works and wisdom are rejected; they want to be humiliated, blaspheme for giving thanks, shout, persecute, murder, and think that their rage is the most pleasing sacrifice to God, John 16:2.

So this verse is joyful, and sings with all delight: Are you not a strange, lovely God, who governs us so strangely and so kindly? Thou exaltest us when thou bringest us low. You make us righteous when you make us sinners. You lead us to heaven when you push us into hell. You give us victory when you put us low. You make us alive when you let us die. You comfort us when you make us mourn. You make us glad when you make us weep. You make us sing when you make us weep. You make us strong when you make us suffer. You make us wise when you make us fools. You make us rich when you send us poverty. You make us masters when you let us serve. And the like innumerable wonders more, all of which are comprehended in this verse, and are praised in Christianity in one heap with these short words: "I thank thee that thou hast humbled me, but also help me again."

V. 22. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

Here he comes to the head of holy Christianity, and presents him 1) also as an example to us, that he also is humbled and exalted, more than all the saints, so that we should not have strange or miraculous things, even though we suffer tribulation and temptation. "If they have called the father of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they so call his household? A servant is no better than his lord" [Matt. 10:24, 25]. But in this verse he recently summarizes the suffering and resurrection of Christ. For in that he is rejected, he indicates 2) his suffering, death,

Shame and mockery, under which Christ is situated. In that he became the cornerstone, he indicates his resurrection, life and reign forever; and brings it in under a likeness of a building. As if a stone does not want to fit into the wall, nor rhyme with the other stones, but disrupts the whole building, and is an ineffectual, useless stone, that it must be rejected, and if another, foreign master would come, who would know how to use the same stone, and would say: "Harret, you great fools, are you master builders, and do not like the stone? It is good for me, it shall not pay for the gap, nor give me a filling stone, nor be so small as a workpiece, but be a corner stone in the foundation, which shall carry me not one wall, but two walls, and do more than no other stone, and more than all the stones in the whole building.

So Christ did not want to rhyme with the Pharisees' character and holiness, nor with the whole world; they could not stand him, he disfigured all their buildings, punished and scolded their beautiful, outward, holy character: then they were angry, condemned, and rejected him, because they did not know what he was good for. Then God, the true builder, accepted it and made it a cornerstone, the foundation on which all Christianity, both Jews and Gentiles, stands. And so it is still. For the stone is rejected, is called rejected, remains rejected. But nevertheless it is and remains precious, noble and valuable to the righteous and faithful, who do not build on their own human work, nor on the power of princes, but on this stone.

But notice who they are that reject this stone. They are not bad people, but the very best, namely, the holiest, the wisest, the most learned, the greatest, the noblest, they must reject the stone. For the wretched, poor sinners, the afflicted, the erring, the despised, the lowly, the unlearned, will be glad of it, and have it heartily. But those are called "builders", that is, those who build, improve and govern the people for the best, with teaching and preaching. They do not have the name that they would be destroyers, harmful, unprofessional, but they are builders, who

1) namely Christ.

2) "an" is missing in the Erlanger.

They are the most necessary, useful and best people on earth, so that if they were not there, heaven would surely fall before evening, and the land and the people would be destroyed. These are rulers, both in the spiritual and secular realms, who have seized the land and the people by their rights, so that it stands, and want to rule over it even God Himself. These were the same among the Jewish people, the chief priests and princes of Jerusalem, Pilate of Rome, Herod of Galilee: they had to reject this stone and not suffer in their building or government, for they knew better.

Therefore, whether kings, princes, bishops, lords, holy, wise, prudent, rich, learned men pursue the gospel, what wonder is it? Who should do it? No one else can do it. If it is to be persecuted, then these must do it, because they are the "builders". And they do it ex officio, because they must see to it that their building does not gain a gap, crack or deformity. Therefore, they should not and cannot suffer God's word and those who speak it, for he disfigures their building, makes gaps and cracks in it, is a rebel, and deceives the people, whom they have so beautifully built, ordered, and restrained, making them completely different from them.

But take great comfort in the fact that here are two buildings against each other, one rejecting the other. But the one that is rejected has a mighty master builder who erects two solid, eternal walls instead of one stone. Meanwhile, where are the building and the builders who reject it? They are completely silent here, God knows nothing about them. This is a sign that they will be destroyed with their building, for he speaks only of the rejected stone and building; he takes care of it. Therefore beware, and be not found among the buildings that are willingly condemned, rejected, and laid up. Neither be thou afraid that thou art among the building that is rejected. For God will have thee unrejected, and will not know thy rejecters, that they perish, and thou remainest for ever. There shall be no righteousness, no works, no holiness, without the one who is Christ, this cornerstone; for there is no other cornerstone. Our own works,

You have to build on it forever, not this cornerstone, but chaff before the wind, nothing else will come of it. It is said that this rejected stone is the cornerstone, or first foundation stone, 1 Cor. 3, 11. ff. [1 Petr. 2, 7.]

V. 23. This was done by the Lord and is a miracle before our eyes.

The Lord Himself, he says, is this strange Master Builder, who makes fools of all the world's wise men and builders, choosing and exalting what they reject, as St. Paul also says in 1 Cor. 1:27: "What is foolish in the sight of the world, God has chosen, that He might put to shame the wise." And Habak. 1, 5: "Look among the Gentiles, and marvel: for I do a work in your days, which ye shall not believe, when it shall be told of it." Although, as this verse says, God always does such works, which no godless person believes, and must become fools about it, this is nevertheless a peculiar thing, that he here makes this rejected stone the chosen cornerstone. This is such a great and strange work that not only all the Gentiles, with all their wisdom and reason, have become fools about it, but also his own people (the Jews) have been so offended and angered by it that they have completely fallen to the ground over it, and have lost both kingdom and priesthood, as well as heaven and earth, and have not been preserved with any miraculous sign, however much and tangible they may have been, and still cannot be brought back by such a long punishment and plague.

And what is causing such discord, so much heresy, and so many factions even among us Christians today? Who is making the papacy so raging, furious, blind, mad and foolish that they do not like the teaching that faith without works makes one pious, blessed and free from sins, death and the devil, who nevertheless confess with their mouths that Christ is this rejected and chosen cornerstone, and yet do not want to let it come into the work, and in fact admit it? And what wonder is it that carnal men and false hypocrites take offense at this? David says here that it is strange even to our own eyes. For though

the dear saints and Christians do not resent it, it is nevertheless strange in their hearts, and to believe it, they have to learn all their lives that they believe it. What others feel, they know best; but I still consider myself a Christian. I know well, however, how sour and difficult it has become for me, and still becomes daily, that I take hold of this cornerstone and keep it. One may call me Lutheran; but one does me almost sheer injustice, or am ever a lowly, weak Lutheran. God strengthen me!

Yes, these words, Christ is our salvation, he is our righteousness, our works do not save us from sins and death, the one rejected cornerstone must do it, 2c., are soon learned and said; and how finely and well I can also do them, my little books show and testify. But when it comes to a meeting, that I have to fight with the devil, sins, death, misery and the world, that otherwise there is no help, advice and comfort, without the one cornerstone, then I find what I can do, and what art it is to believe in Christ. Then I see what David means by this word: "It is a wonder before our eyes. Yes, of course, it seems strange to us, and almost annoying, and nothing everywhere in addition. But my papists sing thus: And it is a small and light thing before our eyes. What faith, faith, they say; thinkest thou that we are Gentiles or Jews? So soon no one can speak this verse, they have believed it out purely in an instant. Yes, unfortunately, too purely from, that they neither us nor nobody have left anything to it.

All Scripture says that God is wonderful in all His works, and calls Him the Wonderworker. But the world does not believe it until it learns of it; rather, every man makes up in his heart about God, as seems right and good to him, that God will do thus and so, thus painting before him all the words and works by which he should abide. No one thinks to himself: "Dear, if he did as I think and understand, it would not be miraculous; how if he did it much higher and differently than I think? No, there is nothing, says Isaiah, they do not let go of their thinking; they carve out and jeer at a God as they would like him to be.

A monk creates for himself such a God who sits above and thinks thus: Whoever keeps St. Francis' Rule, I will make him blessed. A nun thus carves: If I am a virgin, God is my bridegroom. A priest thus: Whoever offers Mass and prays Horas, God will give him Heaven. No one does not think that God chooses the rejected cornerstone alone, and condemns all their rooms and buildings. Thus, God must always allow Himself to be carpentered, mastered and guided, from the beginning of the world to the end; the cornerstone, on which He builds and carps us, may not be liked.

V. 24. This is the day that the Lord is making, let us rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the time of the New Testament, a different day than the sun makes every day; but the Lord himself is the sun here, and makes this day with his light and splendor, and is such a day that is not followed by night, nor does it shine into the physical eyes, but into the heart. Nor is the light of reason, which is also a sun, showing and teaching outward works and rights before the world, but this light teaches grace, peace, forgiveness of sin before God, since no reason knows of. So Christ is called sol justitiae, Mal. 4, 2: "Unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise, and salvation under his wings." This sun shall bring forth righteousness in the daytime, that is, it shall redeem from sins and make righteous all who believe in him, and it shall give salvation or deliverance from death to all who take refuge under his wings or glories. And such brightness is no other than the clarity and revelation of the gospel in all the world, which proceeds from Christ, shines and enlightens the hearts of believers; just as the brightness proceeds from the sun, and enlightens the physical eyes and the external world.

133. and is also a joyful day, as he here boasts, saying, "Let us be glad." For such light and doctrine of grace gives peace, rest, and joy to the heart in Christ, because it thereby realizes that its sin, without its merit, is forgiven, and it is redeemed from death, and for evermore it has a

gracious Father in God through Christ, as St. Paul says in Romans 5:1: "Now that we have been justified by faith, we have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ," 2c., where he goes on to say that this joy and peace endures even in tribulation and makes us brave. Of what joy and peace no unbeliever can know, nor all those who strive by works to become godly and to put away sin, though they almost howl this beautiful verse, especially at Easter, and yet understand nothing by it but the bodily outward Easter, when they are merry with eating pancakes, and not of the grace and redemption of Christ.

(134) But the prophet may well praise this day as the Lord's own day, and exhort us to rejoice. For according to the outward appearance there is no darker day, and shines (as they say) as a dew in the lantern. It must also be called darkness, error, heresy, and the devil's night in the sight of the world, and be evil rejected, just as its sun, the noble cornerstone, must also be rejected, from which it derives its splendor. Therefore also the joy and peace, of which he sings here, is more a tribulation, discord, and all unhappiness, because he is so shamefully hated and persecuted by all the world, as he himself says, Christ, our dear sun, Matth. 10, 22: "You must be hated by all men for my name's sake." Therefore, as this day's light is secret and hidden from the world, so also its joy is spiritual and unknown to the flesh, even though it is the noblest light and the highest joy. For what can be better and nobler than a heart that is enlightened, knows God and all things, and can judge and speak rightly of all things before God? And where can there be greater and higher joy than a happy, secure, courageous conscience that relies on God and fears neither the world nor the devil? Again, where is there greater sadness and melancholy than an evil, despondent, guilty conscience? And what is more wretched and miserable than an erring, uncertain heart that cannot rightly judge of any thing?

v. 25. O Lord, help! O Lord, let prosperity come!

135 This is the place where the people sang Hosanna to Christ as he rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. They took this and the following verse from this psalm at that time, so that it seems that this psalm was well known among the people. So Hosia means: "Help" or true Hülfe; the "Na" behind it is pleading, and means a heartfelt desire, as we say in German: Ach hilf! Dear, help, help! just as with the same "Ach" or "doch" we indicate our pleading heart, and with it would like to move the one we ask. The "Na" in Hebrew does the same, where it is added to Hosia, and is then called "Hosia Na, HErr," which is, O HErr, hilf! or, oh dear HErr, hilf! And from the same word Hosia comes the name JEsus in Hebrew, which means a helper or savior, as the angel Matth. 1, 21. says to Joseph: "You shall call his name JEsus; for he will help his people from their sins", that Hosia and Joshua and Jesus are almost the same, and Joshua is the same name that is called Jesus. But in the course of time such word Hosia was changed, and they made Osanna out of it, at last also women and bells baptized and called Osanna.

This verse is therefore a prayer or wish of joy, just as one wishes someone happiness and salvation when he starts something new or has received something good, as the women did when Elizabeth, the mother of St. John, happily wished happiness for the young son, Luc. 1, 42. 58. and as she herself wished happiness with great joy to the Virgin Mary when she came to her. So also here, because the joyful day of the Gospel is dawning, and the kingdom of grace is approaching, in which sin and death cease, and righteousness lives and reigns, he leaps up with joy, and pours out his heart, and says: "Hosia Na, HErr. Oh, God, praise be to God! Blessed and blessed be the day in which the light rises! Now sing and leap with us heaven and earth and all that is within, that we have experienced this 2c.

137. besides this, he desires and asks that [it] continue as it began, saying;

"Oh Lord, let it prosper," as one is wont to do in such a joyful wish, and to say: Oh God grant that [it] remain and endure in this way, that [it] go forth well, and never be changed. For the kingdom of Christ must suffer much adversity from the devil, the world, the flesh, and always stands as if it were about to fall and perish when the angry tyrants prevail. But against this, this word stands firm: Hosia! Hosia! Hosia! Help! Help! Help! and the other: Hazlich! Hazlich! Hazlich! let it succeed! let it succeed! let it succeed! These words hold, and the desire for joy must remain and triumph.

And we may sing such Hosia Na against our Papists and Turks, and against our mobs; yet no one else sings it but we; for they have no need of Hosia, nor of Jesus; they have fists and art enough for themselves; they rather sing the word, Heach; Heach, Ps. 35, 21. Da, Da! Heha, Heha! Down, down with the heretics! Yea, yea! won, won! Well, let ye rejoice; I have not lived long, and yet such rejoicing much see last howl, and the Hosia Na pass with honor.

V. 26. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, we bless you from the house of the Lord.

139 All this belongs to the desire for joy, that the King of grace, Christ, rides along through his gospel and comes in the name of the Lord. And once again such a desire for joy is necessary. For many come trolling in their own name, bringing not the word of grace, but the doctrine of the works and dreams of their head. All of these, together with the whole world, received this king thus: Cursed be he who comes in the name of all devils; dead, dead with him, as the Jews shouted: Great, great, gone, gone, and quickly crucified. For he must be the rejected and damned cornerstone, and his word a cursed heresy of the devil. So now the monasteries and convents sing this verse. Only the faithful sing thus: "Praised and blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

140 That's exactly how it is with such singers,

as follows: "We bless you, from the house of the Lord", that is, such a joyful wish we do not only to the king, but also to all of you, who are his household, who believe in him and accept him. Blessed, blessed, blessed, and full of all graces and blessedness are you, that you are of the king's house. "Ye are not sojourners nor strangers, but the household of God" [Eph. 2:19], who let yourselves be built upon this rejected cornerstone. Whether you are rejected for it, and must be called the devil's servants, it does no harm; let them blaspheme and curse, and be content that we bless you, and call you blessed and rich. Our testimony is the testimony of God, of all the angels, of all the saints, and of all the creatures of God; why do you ask about the devil and the world?

But I observe that it is well known that "the house of the Lord" means where he dwells, and that he dwells where his word is, whether in the field, in the church, or on the sea. Again, where his word is not, there he dwells not, neither is his house there, but the devil dwells there, even if it were a golden church, blessed by all the bishops. But where his house is, there must be blessing, grace and life, as he says here: "We bless you from the house of the Lord." Because you are in the house of the Lord, you are blessed. He also says in Exodus 20:24: "In the place where I set the remembrance of my name (that is, my word), there will I come unto thee, and bless thee." From which text this verse also flowed, that where God sends His word, thereby His name and work is praised, not our name and work, then He certainly follows, and comes with vain blessings and all graces, as is now said from Moses. But where the devil sends his word and is accepted, he follows with a curse and eternal destruction. Although the world does not believe in any of them, and considers the curse as a blessing, the devil as God, and the lies as truth and praises them.

V. 27. The LORD is GOD, who enlightens us. Adorn the feast with may, even to the horns of the altar.

142 Here he names the child and freely expresses who the king is who rides in like this.

in the name of the Lord, saying: He is God the Lord Himself, who thus appears and shines for us. It may be a rejected stone, but it is still God, for it speaks of the one who appeared and enlightened us, whose gospel we feel in our hearts with its radiance. This same Illuminator is God the Lord Himself, and is no other God. What else could he so gloriously boast, "the LORD is GOD," because no Jew doubts it, unless it is said by a man? But here it is the time of faith to say: The rejected cornerstone, who enlightens the world with a new day, the same is God and Lord. If he were not a man, he could not be the rejected cornerstone, for God is not sworn in him; and yet he is not only a man, but also God Himself. And herewith meets the disgust and anger of the Jews, and all who are horrified to hear that a man is true God, and are afraid of idolatry. As if he should say: Do not be afraid, there is no idolatry here; he is the right God himself. For no one can bring or give the blessing of sins and death, nor enlighten the hearts, without God himself, so that the work also testifies that he must be God.

143) After that it is called, "this feast," and the new day, "adorn with may;" thus it refers to the Old Testament. For the Jews had a feast called Succoth, or Tabernacles, in which they celebrated for eight days, in remembrance of the fact that the children of Israel had dwelt in tents in the wilderness for forty years, Deut. 23:42. He touches on this here, and wants to say: Why do you continue to flaunt your Mayans and Tabernacles? There is now another, your way has an end, here is another day, another house of God, another altar, another feast, another being. Come here, and adorn this feast with May, as the new King and God Himself rides in with graces and blessings, and appears to all the world through His Word. Here put up May, not outside on your field, or in your courts, but in the house of the Lord, yes, up to the horns or corners of the altar, that everywhere may stand full of May and merry. For now there is no more distinction between the Levites and the people; let every one that believeth believe,

The first step up to the altar did not have to be in the law.

144 He also indicates the meaning of the May trees and foliage, namely, that God's name should be adorned, praised, adorned, and praised with joyful, fresh, green, beautiful sermons and songs. These are the maybes, taken from the beautiful trees, that is, from the prophets. And in addition (he says) to the place or corners, which are called the horns of the altar, that is, the altar of thanksgiving, that one offers thanksgiving sacrifices with such May trees, and no longer slaughters calves, sheep, birds on it 2c. Now everything is done with thanksgiving and praise, preaching and teaching, which was done externally by the Levites in the past.

V. 28. You are my God, to you I will give thanks. My God, I will exalt you.

Here he concludes this psalm with a strong confession and resolution, against all the agitation and examples of the unbelievers, and thus wants to say: "Well, one does not want to think of you as God, you must be called the rejected stone and a crucified mischief among the scoundrels, your word and service must be the devil's word and service, and I must suffer all disgrace and fare because of it. But let it be, nevertheless thou shalt be my God, nevertheless I will believe in thee, and truly know that thou art my God. Therefore let the law, the temple, the altar, and all the worship of Jerusalem depart; let friend and foe depart; let all wisdom, holiness, strength, good, honor, and that which will not remain, depart. You alone I will have; you shall be more than enough for me for all these things. I will be your poor little priest and priest, and perform the right sacrifice and service, namely, the sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise, that shall be my priestly office, my May festival or tabernacles, that I know nothing to preach nor to praise, but you rejected stone and crucified God. That is where I want to stay, that is the end of the song, that is what I have sought and meant with this psalm. Let no one tell me otherwise, and let me not be sworn (says St. Paul Gal., 6, 17.): I will bear the scars of my Lord Jesus Christ on my body. Amen, Hafia NaAmen.

V. 29. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is kind, and his goodness endures forever.

When the good songs are over, they are lifted up again at the front, especially when they are sung with love and joy. In the same way, a bride ties her bridegroom's wreath, the front and the back together, so that it is a lovely wreath and adorns the head. So does David with this psalm. When he has sung all the benefits of God, and especially praised the last and eternal grace, he says: "Oh, who can ever thank the Lord enough for his goodness? It is as I said in the beginning 3] that "His goodness endures forever", and especially it endures forever over the fourth poor little group, who could only believe it.

(147) Men also do good, but there is no good deed that can last forever. For human nature cannot suffer ingratitude; nor does any man do good for the sake of God, or for the sake of virtue, but all for his own sake. You can see this if you pay attention to someone who does good to some people; if they then become ungrateful, or speak and do something that annoys him, you will see how he will untie sackcloth and rope, and burn brightly, shout, judge, move up, and say, "Well, I have done this and that to him; let him go, he will not come back. After that, if there is cause for him to take revenge, or if he realizes that he is needed, he stands like a stick or a steady horse; if he can no longer do so, he hinders where he can, and leaves in the queue what he could do for him. Nevertheless, he thinks he is pious, does right, and has no conscience about it; he cannot raise himself so high that he thinks: Well then, I have the good

I have not begun because of my wickedness, nor will I cease because of it; how daily God is pleased with me, if I have done nothing all my life but what has displeased him. No, he does not see such thoughts from the example that his ingrate sets before his eyes, and calls him to take himself by the nose and think of his ingratitude as well.

What, then, is human good deed in essence, but a threefold evil deed? because they seek gratitude, honor, even dominion over those whom they do good, and is a haughty, glorious, revengeful, selfish good deed, whereupon they are enraged and do eternal suffering and harm wherever they can, so that this verse may well be inverted by men: Fie on men for being so wicked; for their harm endures forever, and their good deeds are short-lived, temporal, and done to no one but he who worships and celebrates them, and they do not want to lose any good deeds, nor do they want to do evil.

But God and His children do good in vain, gladly forfeiting their good deeds to the ungrateful, as it is written: "The Lord does everything for His own sake" [Proverbs 16:4]. Therefore he does not desist from the wickedness of men. Thus he also proves that his goodness is naturally good, which does not stand or fall according to another man's virtue or vice, as a man's goodness stands on another man's virtue, and falls for the sake of another man's vice, and becomes worse than he. This is what the whole 37th Psalm says. So also this verse above [§ 3 ff.] is interpreted enough for this time. Christ, our Lord, make of us men true perfect Christians; to him be praise and thanksgiving forever and ever! Amen.

30. 119th Psalm. *)

useful to pray for the word of God against the great enemy of it, the pope and man's doctrine,
translated by D. Martin Luther.

Issued about October 1521.

The Hebrew tongue has twenty-two letters, and the prophet in this psalm has made eight verses on each letter, all eight of which suck on the same letter; thus he has prepared a spiritual, divine game, which should be practiced daily. But special attention should be paid to the word "your", which is found in almost all verses, or in each of them evenly, so that he can tear us away from the teachings of men, and to God's doctrine. Therefore, one should also follow with the heart, and if the same word is spoken, show an aversion in the heart to the teachings of men, and an eagerness for God's words. One must also understand all his words as if he were standing before God between his enemies, who seek him with force, cunning and all the power with which he has to deal with the teachings of God and men.

*The introductory thoughts to the writing "Von der Beichte, ob die Pabst Macht habe zu gebieten" (Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XIX, 817 f.) are taken from the 119th Psalm, and during the preparation of this writing the desire arose in Luther to make this Psalm accessible to the congregation also in German and to provide it with some notes. At first he was undecided whether he should append it to this writing or whether he should publish it separately (St. Louis edition, introduction to the 19th volume, p. 38 p), but he decided in favor of the former, because, as he says in a letter to Spalatin of August 6, 1521, "a part of it was located with the last part of the writing of the confession from the same sheet. The fact that the Psalm is not found in the first copies printed by Johann Grüenberg (the Weimar edition confirms our assumption in the 19th volume, 1. above, that this was the first printer, and not Lufft [De Wette and M. Leuzj, not Lotther [Erl. Ausg.s]) in Wittenberg, but only in later ones, may be explained in this way: The printing of the scripture, which Luther had already sent to Spalatin on June 10, was immensely delayed. On August 15, Luther had only the first three sheets in his hands, and was very unhappy about the delay and also about the poor printing work. So it seems that it was decided to let the Confession alone go out for the time being and to deliver the Psalm later. Before the end of September, the scripture was sent out together with the one against Latomus. Accordingly, we will probably have to set the completion of the psalm in October. For (as the Weimar edition reports, Vol. VIII, p. 133) the original printing of the Scripture of Confession appends the Psalm interpretation on special sheets, with a blank page left in between; the signature, however, is here, just as in the subsequent Lotther editions, a continuous one, so that this Psalm is to be regarded as definitely belonging to the Scripture of Confession. Only in two reprints, which were published without indication of place and time and without the name of the printer, the psalm is missing. We are not able to decide whether the individual editions listed by Walch and in the Erlangen edition according to Olearius No. II and No. 34 really find such, or only parts separated from the Scripture; but through the Weimar edition we are able to state that the edition of the 119th Psalm published by Johann Gutknecht in Nuremberg in 1529: "Der Hundert und neüntzehendt Psalm, das vns Gott bey seinem Wort erhalt, vnd nit abfallen lassen, zu beten. Interpreted and interpreted by D. Martin Luther" w. is not identical with our writing, but significantly expanded and reworked, the psalm in a new translation and with much more extensive explanations; likewise, that the Latin edition of 1527: Ootonarius vuvick?su1. 6XIX. Lx Ildruso versus. Llur. Initiiur. Wittern, is not, as it might seem according to the Erlanger, a mere translation of our Scriptures, but a specimen of Luther's attempts to create a new Latin translation of the Bible. The eleven marginal glosses in it do not match those in the Psalter edition of 1521. The Weimar edition promises a special treatment and rendering of the "Ootonary" in its place. This psalm is called the golden alphabet of David, because it is written according to the 22 BucWabM of the alphabet. To each of these letters eight verses are assigned, therefore it is called "Ootouurius", uulüzUM each of these eight verses begins in Hebrew with the same letter: the first eight verses with Aleph, the WMW eight with Beth 2c. The title of our writing in the original edition invented by Johann Grüenberg in Wittenberg in 1521 (on the leaf with the signature "H") reads: "Der Hundert und achtzehend Psalm nucMckZOßettm für das wort gottis tzur heben" Widder den grossen feynd des selben, den Bapst vnd menschen lere, vorteuHM durch D. Martinum Luther." In the "Gesamtausgabe" our psalm is found attached to the writing of dep Wchcta: in the Wittenberger (1554), vol. VII, p. 276; in the Jenaer (1564), vol. I, p. 520P; in the AltenbipM M. I, p. 805 and in the Weimarschen, vol. VIII, p. 186; separately from this writing: in the Leipziger, Bdzsw WV; bn Walch, vol. V, 1816 and in the Erlanger, vol. 41, p. 92. We give the text according to the WeimarschenÄuKguH, except that we do not put Luther's marginal glosses at the end of each octonary, but we use the printing order WalWMhchalten, which is also found in the Wittenberg and in the Erlanger edition.

X Aleph.

Blessed are those who are completely healthy in the way, who walk in the laws of God.

a) Those who need nothing more for your commandments are thus completely and sufficiently pious.

22 Blessed are they that keep his things
nesses,^b) who seek him with all their heart.

b) That they are not taken away from them by the doctrine of men and hatred.

33. for they that do evil walk not
in its way. c)

c) How presumptuous the teachers of men are.

44. you have commanded your statutes to
hold very. d)

d) That one waits for her alone.

55. oh that my ways were directed e) to
keep your commandments.

e) That they are not prevented and crooked by human doctrine.

Then I will not be disgraced,
who: I look out for all your behests. f)

f) Otherwise, human doctrine becomes vain shame.

77. i will praise you with proper
Hearts,^g) when I learn the judgments of your
righteousness.

g) Otherwise, they praise themselves with crooked, selfish
hearts.

88. your commandments I will keep, leave
me not too much. h)

h) This is when he not only causes to suffer, but also to fall away
through suffering or lust.

The word "wholesome" [in the 1st verse] means
spiritual wholeness and integrity, which St. Paul often
uses to Titus and Timothy [1 Tim. 1, 10. 6, 3. 2 Tim.
1, 13. 4, 3. Tit. 1, 9. 13. 2, 1. 2. 8.] as he calls the
sound word, sound doctrine, sound faith, sound
believers, that is, those who have no defect, not
mending with other doctrines of men, whom he calls
"infirm circa quaestionem," etc. [that is, "those who are sober
in questions," 1 Tim. 6:4].

X Beth.

In what can a young man purify his path?
When he keeps according to your word. 9

a) Which is otherwise taught with much wisdom, and yet
nothing helps.

I have sought you with all my heart; let me not
lack your blessings. b) 10

b) By blinding their glistening.

(3) I have kept your words in my heart;
therefore I will not be a sinner before you. c)

c) But I must also be a heretic before them, so that I do not
let their teaching into my heart. 11

4. give me your blessings, Lord God,^d) teach
me your commandments.

d) For they have maligned thee in me for thy
commandments' sake.

5. by my lips I have proclaimed^e) all the
judgments of your mouth. 12

e) Have not kept silent for fear of their violence.

(6) About the way of thy testimonies I am as 13
glad as any man would be about riches alone. f)

f) This teaches persecution for your words; but it is enough
for me that I do not sin in your sight.

7 I will interpret your statutes and see your 14
ways. g)

g) Whether they reproach me with their nature, and forbid
thy word.

I will keep your commandments, I will not
forget your words. h) 15

h) As they do by addition of their doctrine and works.

16

The little word "interpret" in the 7th verse means
to bring forth and to strike out, so that the opinion
comes to light clearly, as those do who gloss and
comment. Thus God's word should be driven out and
expurgated, cleaned up, brought out over the
doctrines of men, so that they become disgraceful.

Gimel.

1. forgive your servant,^a) so I will live, and I
will keep your words. 17

a) That they may see by this that I lead your truth, and that
their thing is wrong.

182. open my eyes, that I may see
to the miracles^b) at your law.

b) For without the cross and miracles, no one may be pious.

193 . I am a stranger c) on earth,

Do not hide your secret from me.

c) Have no inheritance but your word, therefore let me have it.

20 4. my soul is crushed^d) with longing for your
judgments at all times.

d) As a thing is pounded in a mortar, so the temptations over your
word pound me.

215. you punish the naughty, and are ver
maledeiet, they are missing at your behest. ^e)

e) Although they mean much differently, they meet it alone, and I
shall miss.

226 . roll away from me the shame and
Shame,^f) for I guard your testimonies.

f) So God's word must be despised and blasphemed.

237 . princes also sit^g) and talk

against me, and thy servant shall put forth thy
commandments.

g) For great Hansen fall to them, and from me.

24 8. my adherence is to your testimonies, and they
are my counselors. ^h)

h) They stick to the great and wise, my strength and counsel are
your word.

The little word "to hold" in the 8th verse of this and
the previous letter means that when someone is
presented with many things, and he holds to one and
does it, so that he shows what pleases him. Thus
wisdom says Proverbs 8:31: *Deliciae meae*, "I hold and do
myself unto men"; and Genesis 4:4, 5: *Respexit Deus* etc.,
"God did and did hold unto Abel and his sacrifice, but
unto Cain and his sacrifice he did and did not", and is
a fine little word.

X Daleth.

251 . my soul sticks to the powder of the
Earth,^a) make me alive according to your word.

a) I have been completely destroyed and lie in ashes before the
world, which goes up in the air.

26 2. my ways I have declared,^b) and you have
answered me; teach me your commandments.

b) Whoever confesses his sin, God forgives him, I John 1:9, which
the wicked do not do.

27

3. make known to me the way of your statutes,
^c , so I will interpret your wonders.

c) It does not teach itself from us, especially in the time of the
cross, it may good God to a master.

4. my soul has been dripping^d) with sorrow;
straighten me according to your word.

d) She has cried herself quite¹) skinny and tired, so bad I
have.

5. let the way of falsehood^e) depart from me,
and grant me your law.

e) Who is almost forced to do so by nature and by evil
teachers.

6. the way of faith^f) I have chosen, your³¹
judgments I have imagined.

f) Faith and truth are one thing here; without faith, everything
is a lie.

7. to your testimonies^g) I cling, let me not be³²
put to shame. ^h)

g) Not to doctrines of men.

h) Do not make me ashamed of myself.

8. the way of thy counsels will I walk, for thou
hast enlarged my heart. ⁱ)

i) Made funny, comforting and cheerful.

X He.

1 O Lord God, teach me the way of your
commandments, and I will keep it until the end. ^a)³⁴

a) Do not fall away through love nor suffering.

2 Understand me, and I will keep thy law, and
will keep it with all my heart. ^b)

b) This may not happen in human teachings.

3. guide me on the path of your
commandments,^c) for in him stands my desire.

c) Teachings of men seek only their honor, Gal. 6, 13. and
their desire is crooked.

4. incline my heart to your testimonies, and not
to the benefits. ^d)

d) All teachers of men are selfish, Rom. 16, 18.

5. convict my eyes, so that they do not see the
vain,^e) make me live in your way.

e) One must be under the vanity, but should look closely
at it, although they are very irritating, especially the glitter of
the teachings.

1) In the original: "unß"; for this schstst stie Wittenberger and the
Jenaer have "ganz". The Weimar one offers: "unß [?]" ; the Erlangen one
has "uns" in the text....

386 . niece upon thy servant thy speech,
so that he may fear you. ^{f)})

f) No fear, vain presumption is in human teachings.

397 . Convey the disgrace,^g) to which I have
subjected myself.

get, because your dishes are good.

g) That it will not remain on me and I will fall away.

40 8 perceive, I long for thy statutes, make me alive
in thy^h) righteousness.

h) Not in mine, nor the people's.

1 construction.

411 . and let, O Lord God, come into me
your mercy,^a) your salvation according to your
speech.

a) Without which no commandment work is good.

422 : And I want to tell my molester about the
word; for my hope is in your words. ^{b)})

b) Therefore, I will command you not to avenge me.

43 3. and let not the word of truth depart from my
mouth^c) too much, denu for thy judgments I wait.

c) The "depart" is so God by guilt lets come from someone what he
has, as from an unworthy owner, as He says Matth. 8, 12. [21, 43.]
"The kingdom of God shall be taken from you."

44 4th And I will keep thy law continually from time to
time for ever.

45 5. and I will walk in the breadth,^d) for I have
sought your statutes.

d) In comfort and good conscience, without fear, which conscience
those do not have.

466 And I will talk about your stuff
nissen before the kings, and does not want to be
disgraced. ^{e)})

e) Will not do that of which I am ashamed, even before kings, so
clear is your word.

477 . and will hold me to your prayers.

f) which I love.

f) Will nevertheless not rely on kings, but keep me 2c.

48 8 And lift up my hands unto thy commandments,
which I love, and will interpret^g) thy
commandments.

g) Clean out, freely strike out, no one shy than who have a
porridge in their mouths.

The word in the other verse, "the word," means in
Hebrew as much as how it stands about the thing,
what the reason is, what the thing is, and is said as
much: I will not reproach myself with my blasphemer,
not give one curse for another, but let him!
blaspheme; "I will answer the word," wants to say
what and how the thing is in itself. Thus 1) Proverbs
27:11: "Learn wisdom, that thou mayest answer the
blasphemer the word," that is, the trade, the thing;
and St. Paul Col. 4:6: "That ye may know how ye
ought to answer every one."

X Zain.

1. remember the word done to your servant, 49
for which you made me wait.

2. the same is my comfort in my humiliation,^a 50
) for your words make me alive.

a) That²) I will be nullified and oppressed.

3. the naughty deceive^b) me too much, from
your law I incline not. 51

b) Pretend to be good, so that they turn a lot of me, and do
it with great diligence.

4. I have remembered your judgments from of
old, O LORD God, and have been comforted. ^{c)} 52

c) For he has never yet finally forsaken the righteous.

5. storms have possessed me^d) from the
wicked, who forsake thy law.

d) The Gleißner storm always around their thing, against the
truth, which goes gently.

Your commandments are my song in the⁵³
house of my pilgrimage. ^{e)})

e) This life is a pilgrimage, our dwelling is not here, God's
word alone is our comfort.

7 I have remembered your name in the night, 54
O LORD God, and I will keep your law.

8. the same has become my own,^f) for I will
guard your statutes.

f) Have no other god.

55

56

1) In the original: you.

2: Instead of "Das" in the original, it should probably be read "Da".
This marginal gloss will be a closer description of the "humiliation".
This is how Wittenberg understood it, offering "(consolation) When I
am too not and oppressed." Walch has regarded the gloss as a
description of consolation, and has therefore inserted a "not": "Daß
ich nicht zunicht" rc.

The little word in the 3rd verse, "to deceive", means that one deceives God's word and teaches human doctrine under God's name. This is what all gospels do beyond measure, they do not stop, they have deceived everyone, Ps. 1, 1: In cathedra illusorum non sedit.

X Cheth.

571 . my inheritance,^a) Lord God, I say,
so be that I keep your word.

a) That is why I also have to suffer hardship here, but those have enough.

582 . i have confessed before your
view from the bottom of my heart, have mercy on
me according to your speech.

59 3 I have considered my ways, and will turn my foot
unto thy testimonies.

60 4. I have hastened^b) and have not delayed to
keep thy commandment.

d) To raise and stand still is to go back into God's ways, and to be silent is as much as to teach contrary.

615 . the godless mob has robbed me,^c)
I have not forgotten your law.

c) He has turned away many hearts from me with their glittering and lists, who forget yours through such glitter.

62 6. at midnight I will rise to praise you for the
judgments of your righteousness.

637 . I am a fellow comrade^d) of all those who
have you

fear, and keep your statutes.

d) As they suffer, I also suffer, as St. Paul says f2 Cor. 11, 29.].

64 8. Your mercy, O LORD God, is full upon the
earth,^e) teach me your commandment.

e) And, unfortunately, no one wants to accept, pursue them to it.

X Teth.

651 . lord god, you have done well by your
a servant, according to your word. ^a)

a) Not on my merit.

1) From here to the end of the psalm, the word "YOUR" is printed in capital letters in all inflections, with a few exceptions.

66

2. teach me good order and knowledge,^b) for
I have believed your command. 67

b) For no one knows how much we err, until the cross teaches how far we are from God's commandment; otherwise 68
we walk in our own will, and know it not.

Before I was humbled, I failed, but now I hold 69
your speech.

You are good and kind; teach me your
commandments.

5. the wicked have brought falsehood upon
me;^c) I will guard thy statutes with all my heart. 70

c) They preach and hold their lies before me; I shall hear them and receive them with violence.

6. her heart is thickened,^d) like the fat of lard,
I will keep thy law.

d) In their own teachings, which they like so much.

(7) It is good for me that thou hast humbled 71
me, that I may learn thy commandments.

e) That I may know myself as I have sought myself in all things.

8. good is the law of thy mouth unto me,^f) 72
above all thousands of gold and silver.

f) That I may seek you and yours henceforth.

The other verse wants this: This life may not be without an outward way of giving, so he asks that God teach him such a way that he does not fall on it as if it were the right reason, and remains in knowledge and right distinction of the outward and inward being.

X Iodine.

73

1. your hands have made me and prepared/) make me understand, so I learn your command. 74

a) I am your own, do not let me have foreign teachers.

2. those who fear you look at me and rejoice,^b) that I wait for your words.

b) The pious see me gladly and rejoice in me; but to those I am death in their eyes. 75

3. I recognize, Lord God, that your judgments are righteousness, and in faith^c you have humbled me.

c) Truth.

76 4. let your mercy^d) be my comfort, according to your speech to your servant.

d) Not my works; for that is contrary to faith and truth, wherein I am humble.

77 5. let thy mercy come upon me, and I shall live; for to thy law will I cleave.

78 6. that the insolent may be put to shame; for they wrong me with falsehood. ^{e)} But I will interpret thy statutes.

e) Pervert my teaching, and falsely pretend to adorn themselves.

797 . that they must convert to me^f) who are fear you, and those who recognize your testimonies.

f) The wicked turn all the others back.

80 8. let my heart be wholly sound^g) in thy statutes, that I be not put to shame.

g) Without blemish, simple, which must not be allowed all kinds of human doctrine and patchwork, as is said above in the first verse of the first letter.

X Caph.

811 . my soul has become all^a) after dei n part, upon thy word have I persevered.

a) From great desires through persecution.

822 . my eyes have been all after of your speech,^b) and say: When will you comfort me?

b) That the enemies storm so strongly against it,

83 3. for I have become like a wineskin in the smoke,^c) of your commandment I have not forgotten.

c) Withered and useless in the sight of the world, that makes persecution.

844 . what are the days^d) of your Servant? When will you pass judgment on my persecutors?

d) When will my time also come, that I may also rightly stand? Your time is every day.

85 5. the naughty have charged me with display,^e) which was not according to your law.

e) As one serves at table, so they dress up their things so that they seem delicious, and they press down mine.

1) In the original: my.

6. all your command is faith/) with falsehood 86 they persecute me, help me.

l) Currency.

7 They have made me near all on earth, and 87 I have not forsaken thy statutes.

008 According to thy mercy make me alive, and I will keep the testimonies of thy mouth. 88

In the 5th verse "the insolent" are those who are bold and pleasing to themselves, driving without fear, as the pope and his do. These are called by St. Paul Tit. 1, 7. *αυθαδεις*. Of the same 2 Petr. 2, 10. it is also called "*αυ&αδεις*, who respect themselves and despise others, drive safely, as if they could not err; as then is of all Gleissner kind, drum they are often called in this Psalm.

X Lamed.

Lord God, always and forever your word exists in heaven. ^{a)} 89

a) Whether it will be pursued on earth. 90

2. from one generation to another your faith remains,^b) you have prepared the earth, and it stands.

b) Whether it does not appear before the world. 91

3. to your judgments they stand today, for all things serve you. ^{c)}

c) All things are beneficial to the pious, Rom. 8, 28, although it seems that you do not need anyone as much as the enemies of the truth. 92

4. if it were not for my adherence to your² law, I would perish in my humiliation.

5. always and forever I will not forget your 93 statutes, for through them you have made me alive.

I am yours, make me blessed, for I have 94 sought your statutes.

7. the wicked wait for me to bring me, your 95 testimonies I understand.

8. all omnipotence I have seen an end,^d) your 96 command is very broad.

d) They will stop one day, I know that.

2) In the original: yours.

O Mem.

- 971 How dear I am to your heart!
It's my display all day long. ^{a)} a) That I make it out and bring it to day.
- 98 2. you have made me wise over my enemies by your commands, ^{b)}) for it is always and forever mine.
b) For the same is divine wisdom; but the enemies have human wisdom, their own doctrine.
- 99 3. above all my teachers thou hast made me wise¹) for thy testimonies are my display. ^{c)})
c) Because they run up, do not think about it, so that they may well emphasize it, as I do; therefore, that they teach me, they themselves do not understand. One must think about it and interpret it.
- 100 4. over the old ones^{d)}) I am understanding, because your statute I guard.
d) Age does not help from any foolishness, where it does not go in God's commandments; however, they raise their age high, as if it should be enough with that, that they are the old ones, the teachers, the supreme ones, I should therefore be wrong. Not so 2c.
- 101 5. all paths of wickedness have I forbidden my feet to keep thy words.
- 1026 . from your courts I am not for you have instructed me.
- 1037 . how sweet to my throat are your Talk, more than the honey of my mouth.
- 104 8. from your statutes I have become understanding, therefore I hate all paths of falsehood.

It is to be noted that in this many times he is praised that he has sought, loved, kept 2c. God's commandment and the like, and yet again asks that he may and will keep, know, love and do them. This seems to be contrary to each other. But it is to be understood thus: When he stands against his opponents who persecute him for the sake of God's commandment, he justly boasts that his way is right and good. But he prays that he may continue in it, and increase more and more in the sight of God, before whom no one is sufficiently pious.

1) In the original: "geschiede", which the Wittenberg edition has resolved by "geschickt". Our resolution is confirmed by the Middle High German word: geschidecheit". Cf. Dietz s. v. Gescheidigkeit.

Well.

- 1 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. 105
- 002 I have sworn and purposed to keep the judgments of thy righteousness. 106.
3. I am very humbled, Lord God, make me live according to your word. 107
4. let the free speeches of my mouth be pleasing, O LORD God, and teach me your judgments. 108
5. my soul is always in my hand, ^{a)}) and your law I have not forgotten. 109
- a) That is, in danger, must wait all the hours of them of the death, that it seems that my soul is not in your hand, since it is well kept, but in mine, since it can be taken all the hours.
6. the wicked have laid ropes for me^{b)}) and I have not strayed from your statutes. 110
- b) Their teaching and glistening.
7. i have prayed^{c)} your testimonies always and forever, for they are the joy of my heart. 110
- c) I respect not having an inheritance otherwise.
8. I have inclined my heart to do thy commandments always, even unto the end. 111

112

The fourth verse, about the "free", is to be understood from the teaching of God, which is free, makes free and willing from all human laws, which only make captive consciences. Now the verse does not only imply that God allows such things to please him, but also that such preaching of freedom is pleasing to everyone, and displeases the captious preaching of men.

O Samech.

1. I am an enemy of the weblings, ^{a)}) and I love your law. 113
- a) Which weave hither and thither, and go like the tops of trees 2) from the wind, of which Paul Eph. 4, 14: "Let us not weave hither and thither from all manner of vine of doctrine" rc. Only the one, constant ear of faith should bmrewi us on Christ, the rock.
- You are my protection and shield; I rely on your words. 114

2) "Kipfe" - top.

115 3 Depart from me, you evil-doers; I will guard what
my God has commanded me.

116 4. keep me according to thy speech, and I shall live;
and let me not be ashamed of my waiting.

117 5. sustain me, and I shall be saved; and I will keep
thy commandments alway.

1186 . you let underfoot^b) all, which there
lack of your commandments, for falsehood is what
they raise. ^c)

b) As Christ says Matth. 5, 13: "The salt, if it has lost its flavor,
is of no use, but that people run over it. So here he means that such
a people is of no use, because it is trampled under by the teachings
of men; as one says of useless people: one should protect a weir with
it, or fill evil ways with it.

c) Exalt, praise their teaching and work.

1197 . you have called all the wicked on earth as
the sweepings thrown out, therefore I love your
testimonies.

1208 . my flesh has lost its hair.
I have bristled at your terror, and at your
judgments I have feared.

In the 7th verse the Hebrew word "Schabab" 1)
has become German, and means reprobate thing, as
sweepings, cinders, chips, foam, chaff, pomace 2c.,
and reads thus: You have shababt them like the
sweepings, and what everyone throws away, that
they are of no use, but to fill dams and weirs with
them, that one runs over them. Though they think
otherwise, as if they alone were chosen. They are
Shabab.

Ain.

1211 . I have done the judgment and the
righteousness;^a) do not hand^b) me over to my
mockers. c)

a) I have done what is right and just.

b) The "surrender" here means in Hebrew, to put the adversaries
to rest, which we say in German: Let them not cool their weary on
me, or let them not lay their head gently on me, as they intend.

c) These are those who want to be right by force, and should not
be called wrong nor force what they do right?) who must therefore
have harm and wrong to it, two misfortunes at once. But those who
publicly use unlawful force are not of this kind.

1) Hos. 8, 6. Here in this verse is MPY, Schlacken (Weim.).

2) "Right" has dissolved the Jenaer by: "righteous".

122

2. be thou surety for thy servant for good,
that the wicked mock me not.

(3) Mine eyes are all become after thy¹²³
salvation, and after the speech of thy
righteousness.

4. do unto thy servant according to thy¹²⁴
mercy, d) and teach me thy commandments.

d) Not according to my merit, though I am of the right road
against my enemies.

5 I am your servant; give me understanding,
and I will know your testimonies. ¹²⁵

6. it is time for you, O LORD GOD, to do this)
they have broken your law. e) e) With their laws and ¹²⁶
teachings.

(7) Therefore I love your commandment
concerning the gold and the gold of the¹²⁷
passover. 3)

(8) Therefore I have judged myself¹²⁸
completely according to all your statutes; all the
paths of falsehood I hate.

In the other verse, when he makes God his
guarantor, but for good, it is as Judas accepted his
brother Benjamin on his faith to keep him. So here he
desires that God would receive him and stand for him
for his own good: Best against all enemies. But if God
stands for us and answers, who will complain?

O Phe.

1. your testimonies are vain wonders,^a) ¹²⁹
therefore my soul keeps them.

a) For he who is to keep them must live strangely, so that
everything goes differently than it appears.

2. the door of your words^b) enlightens and ¹³⁰
understands the lowly. ^c)

b) That is, when they are opened, they blind the scholars
first of all.

c) The simple-minded, who are persuaded, are not great
in their prudence.

(3) I have opened my mouth and breathed, (^d ¹³¹
) for I long for your command.

d) When he is afraid according to your words and
consolation.

4. behold me, and have mercy upon me
according to the judgment of the lovers of thy ¹³²
name. ^e)

e) Which your dishes hold.

3) "Pasengold" of I2, purified gold.

133 5. direct my footsteps according to your speech, and do not let some trouble rule over me. ^{f)}

f) "Trouble" according to the prophets means the good life without faith, since it is vain trouble and no good conscience.

Deliver me from the scorn of men, and I will keep thy statutes.

1357 . enlighten your face about your
Servant, and teach me your commandments.

136 8. but mine eyes have left rivers of water, that the^{g)}) keep not thy statutes.

g) The Adversaries.

X Zadik.

1371 . lord god, you are righteous and just.
tig^{a)}) is your dish.

a) Strack and bad, do not look at the person when they presume.

1382 . you have called the justice dei
ner testimonies, and the faith^{b)}) very much.

b) Currency.

1393 . my zeal has consumed me,^{c)}) that
my anxieties forget your words.

c) That is, it has made me disgruntled and bitter, so that I am almost dying.

140 4. Thy speech is very approved^{d)}) than by fire,
and thy servant loveth it.

d) Therefore, it suffers no addition of human teaching.

1415 . I am young^{e)}) and spurned,^{f)})
I have not forgotten your statutes.

e) That is, small and small.

f) They charge that their thing is old, I wanted to teach them new thing, and come new therefore, they spurn me.

1426 . your justice is a righteousness
always and always,^{g)}) and your law is the truth.

g) Glittering righteousness lasts only temporally before men.

1437 . fear and sorrow has found me, my
To keep closed is at your command.

144 8. the righteousness of your testimonies is
always and always, understand me, so I live.

It is to be noted that this psalm goes almost entirely to the first commandment, which teaches that we should honor God. There the two people are divided. The pious know that one must honor God with faith, and not build on anything, but leave all things inwardly and outwardly. The pious do not know this, and think that they honor and serve God with many works; therefore they make many laws that hinder faith; and so their actions go against all of God's word, speech, laws, commandments, and testimonies, so that one cannot say enough about them; for they remain on their works and laws.

X Cuff.

I have cried with all my heart, answer me, O 145
Lord God, and I will keep your commandments.

I have cried unto thee, make me blessed,
and I will keep thy testimonies. 146

(3) I came before in the morning, and cried
out; I waited for thy words. 147

4. my eyes have come before in the morning
awakening to interpret^{a)} your speech. 148

a) To clean out and display reason 2c.

5. hear my voice according to your mercy, O
LORD GOD, according to your judgments make
me alive.

6. my persecutors draw near to iniquity, and 149
have turned away from thy law. ^{b)}

b) That is, they seek God here and there, but leave faith in the queue; thus they only get further away from Him and deeper into sin, the more they want to be saved by works and laws. 150

7. you are near,^{c)} Lord God, and all your
commandments are truth.

But GOD is near, must not seek Him far, in the heart
He is found by faith.

8. i have known thy testimonies before,^{d)}) 151
that thou hast established them for ever.

d) Above all things, knowledge of your commandments,
which I do not preside over, is my first, noblest and best. For
the knowledge will be eternal, as the testimonies are also
rc. 152

Res.

1531 . look at a) my humiliation,
and save me, for I have not forgotten your law.

a) To look with diligence and with a while means "to look".

154 2. judge b) my cause, and save me; to thy
speech make me alive.

b) Between me and my widow; for God alone must be the judge here.

1553 Salvation is far from the wicked,
for they do not seek your commandment.

156 4. Your mercies, O Lord God, are many,
according to your judgments make me alive.

1575 . my persecutor and anxious is
much, from your testimonies I do not incline.

1586 I have looked at the through
ächter, c) and made me angry, for they do not
keep your speech.

c) Those who go above pay no attention to such things, let it go, and still want to be pious, holy, do not accept it before their being, in which they are drowned. Now it almost hurts when a thing is great, and it should be seen that they do not accept it, to whom it is most due. I am called so: "Hans does not respect his."

Look, Lord God, I love your statutes; according to
your mercy make me alive.

160 8. the head of your word is truth, and eternal is
all the judgment of your righteousness.

X Schin.

1611 . princes^a) have persecuted me without
Cause, and my heart is afraid of your word,

a) Everything that is authority; for the multitude, the greatness, the height, the power, the reason, the wisdom, the riches are all against the commandment of God.

1622 . i am glad about your speech when
who finds much robbery (that is, spoil).

163 3. I am an enemy of falsehood, and I am afraid
of it; b) but I love your law.

b) Which is the highest good for the Gleissners.

4. seven times^c) of the day I have praised 164
you for the judgments of your righteousness.

c) That is, often uud many times.

5. those who love your law have much
peace, and they are not troubled .^d 165

d) The gospel also vexes the truth, and every thing that is not theirs; but neither does sin vex the faithful, but helps them all things for good, Rom. 8:28.

6 I have waited for your salvation, O Lord
God, and your commandment I have done.

7 My soul has kept your testimonies and 166
loves them very much.

008 I have kept thy statutes and thy 167
testimonies. For all my ways are before your
eyes. 168

X Taph.

1. my praise^a) come near, Lord God, before
your face, according to your word make me
understand. 169

a) Or my prayer with praise.

2. let my supplication come before your face;
according to your speech deliver me.

3. my lips will foam^b) your praise, for you 170
have taught me your commandments.

b) As a pot over the fire foams and overflows with heat, so 171
out of great love he preaches the word of God freely.

4. my tongue will answer your speech,^c) for
all your commands are righteousness.

c) For by God's word one should answer, as Christ did to
the tempter in Matth. 4, 4. 7. 10.

5. let your hand help me, for I have chosen 172
your statutes.

(6) I desire, O LORD God, thy salvation, and
to thy law do I cleave.

7. let my soul live, and it will praise you, and
your judgments will help me. 173

008 I have erred as a lost sheep; seek thy 174
servant, for I have not forgotten thy command.

175

176

31. interpretation of the 120th Psalm. *)

in a Christian letter of consolation to the people of Miltenberg, how they should take revenge on their enemies.

February 1524.

Jesus.

To all the dear friends of Christ at Wittenberg,
Martinus Luther, Ecclesiastes at Wittenberg.

Grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord
Jesus Christ. The holy apostle St. Paul, when
comforting his Corinthians

he began thus, 2 Cor. 1:3, 4: "Blessed be God, the
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies,
and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our
afflictions, that we also may comfort with comfort those
who are in afflictions, that we may be comforted by God."
In which words

"The city of Wittenberg am Main is located in the former Churmainzian Nicedomamte Aschaffenburg, which now belongs to Lower Franconia in Bavaria. There in 1523 by the Protestant-minded citizens Johann Draco (actually Drach, also Draconites, and after his birthplace Carlstadt in Franconia also I). Johann Carlstadt called) in a Predigerstölle. The altarists, who were upset about his evangelical sermons, sued him at the Mainz "Vitzthum" in Aschaffenburg, whereupon the Miltenbergers received the order from him to remove Drach, but he himself was banished. The citizens would have taken offense at the priest who read the ban in the church on September 8, 1523, if Drach himself had not resisted (Erlanger Briefwechsel, Vol. IV, p. 298 f.). Now an aggravated order appeared, which caused the citizens to request Drach to give way for a while. He fled, but on October 22, the governor of Mainz occupied the city, had many citizens imprisoned and maltreated (Köstlin, Martin Luther [3P Vol. I, p. 652]. The next day the citizens had to pledge at the town hall to stay with the old faith. From Wertheim, Drach wrote a letter of comfort to the Miltenbergers; around Martinmas he was in Nuremberg, at Christmas in Erfurt, from where he again addressed a letter to the Miltenberg community. The next year he wrote to them from Wittenberg for the third time. Still in 1550, he dedicated a treatise to his old congregation from Lübeck: Of the New Heaven and Earth in the Second Part of His God-Promises. Seckendorf (Hist. Tutb., lib. I, p. 279n), who only assumes (eonjicūo) that our Johann Carlstadt is identical with Johann Draconites, reports about his further life, that he, as an excellent orientalist, wrote commentaries on the Chaldean Targum. In Erfurt he received the dignity of a Magister, in Wittenberg that of a Doctor of Theology, then, after he was expelled from Miltenberg, he was appointed Professor of Theology in Marburg. In Augsburg in 1530 he was present with other theologians at the handing over of the Confession. He then taught theology in Rostock. Later, towards the end of his life, he was made superintendent of the Pomesan diocese by Duke Albrecht of Prussia (Dpisooputui Humbisnsi pruppositus kuit), but did not stay there long, but went to Wittenberg to have his biblical psntaplu printed there. There he died on April 18, 1566, at the age of 70. (In Seckendorf erroneously 1560, because he was born in 1494. Walch, Einl. zum 4. Bande, p. 38, Note I.) On Thursday after Martinmas (Nov. 12) 1523, he wrote a petition to the Elector of Mainz in Nuremberg, in which he describes the cruel persecution of the innocent people of Miltenberg, who had not been guilty of any violence, but only had to suffer for the sake of the word of God. He asks for the liberation of the imprisoned citizens and especially for that of his imprisoned captain. This letter appeared in print and is included in Rabus, Märtyrerbuch, Theil 2, p. 383. The Miltenbergers were, as Seckendorf 1. e. p. 278 says, the first against whom force of arms was used for the sake of the Gospel. Therefore, Luther decided, since the Elector of Mainz had forbidden to write in the matter of the Miltenbergers neither to him nor to the Miltenbergers, to send out a public letter of consolation to them, which he communicated to the Elector Albrecht on February 14, 1524 in a letter (Walch, old edition, vol. XXI, 67; De Wette, vol. II, p. 484). He had to do this "so that my Christ would not say to me on the last day: I have been imprisoned, but you have not visited me. Luther also emphasizes in this letter: "that the land and the people bear witness that we in Miltenberg were not afflicted for the sake of rebellion, but only for the sake of the Gospel or preaching. Wstre's writing was first published by Nickel Schirlentz in Wittenberg (in February, De Wette II, 475 note) in 1524 under bemWtel: "Eyn Christlicher trostbrief an die Miltenberger. Wie sie sich an yhren feynden rechnen sollen, aus dem lIst. Malm. There. Mart. Luther. Vuittemberg MDLLiij." A reprint came from Joseph Klug in Wittenberg 1524 herauKj and four others (Cf. Erl. Briefw., vol. IV, p. 298) without indication of printer and place, in the same JahW. M the collections: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. III, p. 63b and (duplicate) vol. VI, p. 384b; in the JeuM §885), vol. II, p. 360; in the Altenburg, vol. II, p. 751; in the Leipzig, vol. VII, p. 546; in the Erlanger, vol. 41, p. 115; and in De Wette, vol. II, p. 475. This writing has also been translated into Latin and is found in the Latin Wittenberg edition (1558), tom. VII, fol. 488b and in Aurifaber's collection of letters, torn. II, kü18Sd. Aurifaber, in his table of contents, has included „v. Eurlstuckio", while afterwards in the text he offers correctly: "voutoris üobunnis Oarolstucilii." We give the text after the Erlanger, which brings the original print.

He teaches by his own example that one should comfort the afflicted, but that this comfort is not from men but from God. Which he noticeably adds, in order to avoid the false, shameful comfort, which the world, the flesh and the devil also seek and give, by which all benefit and fruit of suffering and the cross is spoiled and prevented.

2. but what comfort comes from God, he shows in Rom. 15, 4: "What is written before is written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. He says: "To have hope"; but to have hope is that which is not seen nor felt, Rom. 8, 24. Worldly comfort is to see and feel what the afflicted desire, and not to have patience; but here patience is to abide, with the comfort of the Scriptures in hope. This is also what St. Paul does to his Corinthians. For when he had told them of God's comfort, he finally comes to praise them as they are a letter of Christ, prepared by his evangelical preaching ministry and written with the living Spirit, 2 Cor. 3:3, and sows high praise of the gospel, so that a carnal man, looking at it, might well think: Is this man drunk, who wants to comfort the Corinthians, and yet only praises himself and his preaching ministry, and extols the gospel? But whoever looks at it rightly understands how Paul draws the right, noble comfort of God from the Scriptures and strengthens them and makes them happy through the gospel.

(3) Accordingly, dear friends, I have also resolved to comfort your hearts with such comfort as I have from God in your tribulation, which I have received through D. Johann Carlstadt, your expelled pastor, and also received thorough instruction in other ways, how the enemies of the gospel and murderers of souls have acted against you for the sake of the word of God, which they now call Lutheran doctrine with their sacrilegious blasphemy, so that they may appear to be doing God a service by pursuing the doctrine of men, as the Jews also did against the apostles when Christ was preached to them.

4 Now this would be a worldly comfort that would be of no use to your souls and the cause, but would not be of any use to you.

It would be quite harmful for me or you to console ourselves by reproaching and complaining about the sacrilege and wickedness of the blasphemers. And even if we strangled them all with our fist or drove them away, or had pleasure and joy, if someone punished them for our suffering, nothing would be achieved. For it is a worldly vengeance and comfort, and not due to us; but it is due to our enemies; as you see that in you they have cooled their tempers, and smelled themselves, and are glad of it, and have comforted themselves finely.

5 But what comfort is there? Is there hope? Is patience there? Is there writing? Yes, instead of God they have used their fist, instead of patience they have shown vengeance, instead of hope they have made their courage visible, and they feel what they would have liked to feel. Where does such comfort come from? It is not from God; it must surely be from the devil. That is also true. But what is the end of the comfort that comes from the devil? Paul says it Phil. 3, 19: *Quorum gloria in confusione*, "their glory will come to an ignominious end".

(6) Now behold what a rich and lofty consolation you derive from this. First of all, you are certain that for the sake of God's word you suffer such their outrage and shame; what does it matter that they call it heresy? You are certain that [it is] the word of God, so they may not be certain that [it is] heresy; for they do not want to hear it and have it, nor may they prove that [it is] heresy, and yet on such uncertain grounds they continue to blaspheme and persecute, as St. Peter [2 Ep. 2, 12] says, which they do not know. Therefore they may not have a good conscience in the matter; but ye have a sure and certain mind, that ye suffer for God's sake. Now who is willing or able to say what a blessed, proud defiance this is, when one is certain that one suffers for God's sake? For who suffers? Whose business is it? Who will avenge it if we suffer for God's sake? St. Peter says: "Blessed are you, if you suffer for righteousness' sake." If someone were emperor of the whole world, he should not like such emperorship only for the sake of

Such suffering to overcome, but also consider a dirt against such comforting treasure.

(7) Therefore, dear friends, you truly have no cause to desire vengeance or to wish ill upon your enemies, but rather to show them heartfelt mercy. For you are, indeed, except for what will befall them in the end, already smelled all too high; they have already suffered all too much; they have only benefited you that you may come to God's comfort through their raging; they themselves have done harm that they will "hardly, and some never, overcome.

8 For what is it that they have afflicted you for a time only in body and goods? It must come to an end. And what is it that they rejoice in their courage for a little while? It will not last long. See your salvation and their sorrow. You have a good, sure conscience, and a right cause; they have an evil, uncertain conscience, and a blind cause, which they know not yet how it is wrong. So you have the comfort of God with patience from the Scriptures, in hope; so they have the comfort of the devil, through vengeance, in visible courage.

(9) Now if you were given the desire to choose that part or yours, should you not run and flee from their things, as from the devil, if it were a kingdom of heaven, and hasten to your part, if it were a hell? since heaven may not be happy when the devil reigns there, and hell may not be sorrowful when God reigns there.

10. Therefore, dear friends, if you wish to take good and arrogant revenge and comfort, not only on your physical persecutors, but rather on the devil who rides them, do so to him: Only be glad and thank God that you have become worthy to hear and know His word, and therefore [to] suffer, and be pleased that you are certain that your cause is God's word, and your comfort from God; and let your enemies lament that they have no good conscience in their cause, and have only the wretched, sorrowful devil's comfort, through their iniquity, impatience, revenge, and temporal will of courage. Believe, surely, with such

With a cheerful spirit, praise and thanksgiving, you will do more harm to your god, the devil, than if you strangled a thousand of your enemies. For he did not do it to comfort them or to hurt you physically, but he would gladly make you sad and miserable, which would be useless to God. So you do all the more, and mock him that he lacks his purpose and displeases him.

11. Above this I will show you one more thing, which should tickle him very finely, of which he is most afraid. He knows well that there is a little verse in the Psalter [Ps. 8, 3], which is called: *Ex ore infantium et lactentium fundasti virtutem, ut aboleas inimicum et ultorem*, "You have laid a strong foundation through the mouth of infants and sucklings, that you may put an end to the enemy and avenger. This verse does not only threaten him with grief and misery, but also that he will be destroyed; and that not by great power, which would be an honor for him, but by powerless infants, since there is no power in them. This bites and really hurts the mighty, proud spirit, that its great power, its terrible raging, its raging vengeance should be brought down without force by childish weakness, and that it should not be able to defend itself. To this end let us help, and do it with earnestness.

(12) We are babes and sucklings, when we are weak, and let the enemy be mighty and powerful over us, that they may speak of their things, and do what they will; but we must hold our peace, and suffer as though we could not speak or do anything, like the young children, and they like the mighty heroes and giants. But still God speaks through our mouth his word, which praises his grace. This is such a rock and firm foundation that the gates of hell cannot stand against it. Where this remains and continues, it finally happens that even some of the enemies are converted who were the devil's scales. When such scales are taken off him by the word of God, he becomes naked and weak; so it happens, as this verse says, that it puts an end to the enemy and the avenger. This is a joyful victory and overcoming, which happens without sword and fist; therefore it also hurts the devil. For it does him only gently and

well, if he can move us to anger, revenge, impatience and sadness through his own. But where joy comes out of it, and God's praise and glory of his word, that is his real hell.

(13) Yes, someone might say, it is forbidden to speak of the word of God in body and in good. Well, let him who is strong not keep such a commandment, for they have no power to forbid it. God's word shall, must and will be unbound. If anyone is too stupid and weak, I will give him another advice, namely, that he may secretly rejoice in praising God.

and praise His word, as it is said above, and ask for strength from God to speak of it publicly, so that the enemy and avenger may be disturbed. For this purpose I will give you this hundred and twentieth Psalm in German, and recently interpret it, so that you may see how God comforts you through His Scriptures, and how you should pray against the false blasphemers and furious persecutors. Follow the Psalm with the interpretation:

1) In the original as well as on the title of the scripture according to the Vulgate count: "119th Psalms".

The 120th Psalm.

1. I called to the Lord in my distress, and he heard me.

2 Lord, save my soul from evil mouths and false tongues.

(3) What shall they give thee, and do unto thee, against the false tongues?

4. sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.

005 Alas for my sorrow, that my wandering is so long! I dwell among the huts of Kedar.

6. my soul must so long dwell among those who hate peace.

7 I kept peace, but as I spoke they stirred up strife.

The first verse teaches us where to run when disaster strikes us; not to Caesar, not to the sword, not to our own counsel nor wisdom, but to the Lord, who is the right, single helper in trouble. "I called (saith he) unto the Lord in my trouble." And that we should do this boldly and cheerfully, and not fail, he indicates by saying, "And he heard me"; as if to say, The Lord is pleased to have one run to him in trouble, and is willing to hear and help.

2. the other verse presents the request, showing what the need is; not that God does not know beforehand, but that by this we are provoked and driven to be the more diligent.

to ask. But it is the very need that has come upon you in Miltenberg and your like in German lands, namely, that the evil men and false tongues do not want to suffer the word of God, but maintain their humanity and lies, and keep silent, so that their evil, false, poisonous teachings alone are preached.

The third verse gives advice on how and with what one should help the cause. For human stupidity desires and would like to have help and protection in the world, and many deal with it; this verse indicates this with its advice. But the spirit throws all this away, and wants no help; as follows.

The fourth verse names the right case, namely, sharp arrows of the mighty, that is, if God would send strong preachers who would confidently speak His word, which are the arrows of God. And they are sharp, because 2) they do not pierce and spare, but shoot and wound everything that is human. Thus the false tongues are overcome and changed into true Christian tongues.

5. but "juniper coals" are the true Christians, who prove the word of God, which is signified by the sharp arrows, also with their lives, and set fire to it in fervent, ardent love, shown in works. For it is said that

2) Erlanger: if. Very often, the old editions say "if" or "when" instead of: denn.

Juniper coals keep the fire well and truly. So that this verse desires fine preachers, who lead the word of God mightily in faith, and strike down everything that is the devil's thing, and with works of love let their faith burn and shine. For there are many preachers of the word now, but they are not mighty, neither do they lead it mightily. And even though they lead it, they do not sharpen it, for they spare where there is no need to spare, namely, the great men; in addition, they are so cold of love and crude of life that they annoy more than they improve, and thus make the arrows of God blunt and dull.

The fifth verse laments and shows how such preachers fare, namely, that few believe the gospel, and they throw it to the winds. This grieves the Spirit, who would so gladly have everyone receive it with joy. Therefore he says, "Alas for me! "I must stay here so long and be a guest, for I do not find God's kingdom among them. They also will not go in, [I] preach so long, and help not; they remain yet as they are, and I also must be among them, and dwell among the tents of Kedar. "Kedar" is the name of Arabia in the Hebrew language, and in German it means, sad or gloomy, like those who go here bearing sorrow. The Arabs are a wild, impudent, naughty people, therefore he calls the disobedient of the gospel "Kedar", because they do not let themselves be chastened by the gospel.

The sixth shows that he is not only despised but also persecuted for the word, and yet he must remain among them. They hasten peace," he says, "namely, divine peace, since we have peace inwardly with God in good conscience, and outwardly with all men, harming no one but doing good to everyone; peace they hasten. For they persecute the word that teaches and brings such peace, and defend their doctrine, which makes evil consciences before God, by their own unbelieving works and sects and discord, set up in various ranks among the people.

8 The seventh answers and excuses the false accusation which the wicked lay on the true Christians. For they say,

Such teaching is seditious and causes dissension in the world. Then he said, "It is not my fault, for I kept peace and did no harm to anyone unless I preached true peace; they could not stand it, and they stirred up strife and persecuted me. So Helias also had to hear about king Ahab, as if he had misled Israel, when, as Helias also answers, he himself, and not Helias, misled Israel [1 Kings 18:17, 18].

(9) Then you see, dear friends, that your case is pictured right here, and go as it is written in this psalm. You must have the name of being rebellious, when you have done nothing but hear the word, speak it and let it be spoken. Therefore the temple servants and hunters of the Mainz have made war upon you, and have hated and persecuted the peace which ye taught, and must still dwell and dwell long with such enemies of peace, for God's sake, and are among the tabernacles of Kedar, strange sojourners and evil kept.

(10) What will you do now? You cannot avenge yourselves; even if you could, it is no good. Nor is wishing evil valid, because Christ says Matt. 5:44: "Bless those who curse you, pray for those who insult and persecute you." What then shall you do? Nothing better than to take your eyes off the people who hurt you, and look at the scoundrel who possesses and drives them, how you may take revenge on him and cool your troubles. But he has neither flesh nor bone, he is a spirit; therefore, as St. Paul says, you must not fight with flesh and blood, but with the spiritual skulls above in the air, with the ruler of the dark, blind world. What should the wretched Mainzian whoremongers and fattened bellies do otherwise; they must well do as their god, the devil, chases them; they are not with themselves, therefore even they are to be heartily pitied. They pretend to receive Christian doctrine, so they live more shamefully than whores and knaves, just as if the Holy Spirit should work something to his honor through such devilish dishes; he does it without their knowledge and will, as through Judam, Caipham and Pilatum.

11. so now the some piece is still left,

That you, as this psalm instructs, in this distress turn to the Lord, and cry out before him about such an evil tongue, and with earnestness and with all your heart ask for strong archers, who shoot sharp arrows at the devil, hit, and do not miss, and for fiery juniper coals, which with fervor and fire set the deceived, blind people on fire, and enlighten them with good life, to the praise and glory of God's name. If you do this, you will shortly see how abundantly you will smell the devil and his scales, so that your heart will laugh at them. But see to it that you do such supplications with all confidence, and do not doubt that God, for whose word you are afflicted, will hear you, and send out his arrows and coals with heaps, so that where they have suppressed the word in Miltenberg in one place, it shall arise in other ten; and the more they blow into the fire, the stronger it shall burn.

(12) For the fact that the word of God is not yet so strong as it should be, and that we would like it to be (although they think it is too strong), I cannot blame anyone else, but that we are too lazy to ask for sharp arrows and hot coals. He has commanded us to ask that his kingdom come, and that his name be sanctified, that is, that his word and the Christians increase and become strong; but because we let it lie as it lies, and do not ask with earnestness, that is why it goes on so lazily, and the arrows are blunt and dull, the coals cold and raw, and the devil is not yet almost afraid of us.

13 Therefore let us make up and be fresh; the time is here. He does us many evil tricks everywhere; let us also once

prove to him something that annoys him and avenge ourselves; that is, let us pray to God without ceasing until He sends us armed archers with sharp arrows and coals enough.

Behold, dear lords and friends, I have refrained from writing such a letter of comfort to you, although others might have done it better and have greater cause. But since my name is also involved, and you are being persecuted as Lutherans, I think it would not have done me any harm to accept you firing me as myself.

(15) And although I do not like it that the doctrine and people are called Lutheran, and must suffer from them that they so profane God's word with my name, yet they shall let Luther, the Lutheran doctrine and people remain, and come to honor, again, they and their doctrine perish and become disgrace, even if it would be sorry for all the world, and would displease all the devils. If we live, they shall not have peace from us; if we die, they shall have still less peace. In short, they shall not be rid of us; they shall go down, and willingly give themselves to us; and their wrath and raging shall not avail them. For we know the word which we preach, and shall not take it from us all. Let this be my prophecy, which shall not fail me, God have mercy upon them.

(16) I hereby commend you, dear friends, to God's grace and mercy; and also pray to God for me, a poor sinner, and let your preachers be commanded to preach Christ, and not the pope or the temple boys of Mainz. May God's grace be with you. Amen.

32. interpretation of the 127th Psalm,*)

to the Christians at Riga in Liefland.

1524.

D. Martin Luther to all dear friends in Christo, in Riga and in Liefland.

Grace and peace from God our Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. I have long been admonished, dear friends, to write something Christian to you, and would have gladly done so, as I am obliged to do, but I have been hindered by all sorts of things, besides that I knew nothing in particular to write, because God, our Father, has so abundantly graced you with His holy word that you can both teach and admonish, strengthen and comfort yourselves among yourselves, perhaps better than we can. But because such is desired of me, I have stolen so much time to awaken my spirit along with yours with a spiritual, divine chant, and have undertaken to interpret the 127th Psalm.

(2) And I have done this so that this psalm may, first of all, finely draw the hearts away from avarice and the care of temporal food and goods to faith in God, and recently teach how one should keep oneself Christian, to acquire and keep temporal goods. For it is to be presumed that neither with us, nor with you, the gospel that has risen will be better than it was in the time of Christ and the apostles, even from the beginning of the world. For not only the evangelists, but also all the prophets complain that avarice and the care of temporal goods almost hinder the fruit of the gospel. The noble word of God falls among thorns and is suffocated, so that it does not bear fruit, as experience, unfortunately, shows us all too clearly every day. And Paul also complains [Phil. 2, 21],

*The German Knights of Lydia had already turned to the Gospel, especially the German citizens in the cities of Niga, Reval and Dorpat. Since 1521, Andreas Knöppe (Cnophius), who was expelled from Treptow in Pomerania at the same time as Joh. Bugenhagen, had been proclaiming to them the righteous word of God. On August 20, 1522, the secretary of the city of Riga, Johann Lohmüller (De Wette III, p. 490 writes Luther's name like this, otherwise we also find "Lomoller"), addressed a letter to Luther, in which he urgently asks him in the name of the whole church of Liefland, because of their love for the gospel of Christ and for Luther's teachings, to address any letter to them, or to dedicate a writing to them. (This letter is found in Kappens "Kleine Nachlese", Theil II, p. 545.) Luther complied with this request first by a missive to all Christians in Riga, Reval and Dorpat in Liefland in August 1523 (Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. X, 1760), then in the following year also by our writing, which he addressed to them. It appeared in Wittenberg under the title: "Der hundert vnd Sieben vnd zwentzigst Psalm ausgelegt an die Christen zu Nigen ynn Liffland. Martin Luther. Wittemberg. M.V.XXIII." The Erlangen edition lists four other editions besides this one with similar titles and no indication of the printer. It was not until 1534 that an edition with the printer's name appeared in Wittenberg under this title: "Der hundert vnd XXVII. Psalm. Nisi Dominus ediscauerit domum. How to keep oneself Christian, to acquire good time, and to keep it. Interpreted by. Mart. Luther. Wittemberg. M.D.xxxiiij." At the end with the song in song notes: "Vergebüß ist all mühe vnd kost" 2c. Signature of the printer: "/Printed at Wittemberg by Görg Rhawen. 1534." In the collections: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. III, p. 66 b: in the Jena (1585), vol. II, p. 364; in the Menburg, vol. II, p. 755; in the Leipzig, vol. VI, p. 550 and in the Erlangen, vol. 41, p. 128. Also in De Wette, vol. II, p. 595. This writing was translated into Latin by Vincentius Obsopoeus. It is found in the Latin Wittenberger (1558), torn. VII, 1r-1. 510 and in Aurifaber's collection of letters, tom. II, fol. 205b. Only the Erlangen edition reproduces the text according to the latter single edition of 1534; at the conclusion of the writing are these words: "Folget der Psalm: Xisi üöminnk mÖitinnsvrsit Oomnm, in a beautiful song verfasst. (See the same at the end of this volume.)" But at the end of the volume it is not written. We assume that the song is not by Luther, because it is not found among his spiritual songs, nor does any of the above-mentioned collections have it. Although De Wette calls the edition of 1534 (Vol. II, p. 595) an improved one, it is in truth only a somewhat altered one. The title is expanded, the text of the psalm is no longer that of 1524, but instead the later one of our Bible is inserted; furthermore, the marginal gloss to the 127th Psalm (St. Louis edition, vol. VIII, 1750); then the Summarium on the same (ibick. vol. IV, 187). Also, the interpretation does not agree with the text, and errors have crept in here and there, e.g., § 7 "honestly" instead of: "conjugally"; "Thüren" instead of: "Thürm", which is Thürme, 2c. Thus, in this form, it is no longer Luther's original letter. We have therefore retained the original relation with Walch, but compared it with the Jena edition, De Wette and the Latin.

Every man seeketh his own, not that which is of Jesus Christ.

3. I have now preached and written much that good schools should be established in cities, so that learned men and women could be educated and become Christian, good pastors, preachers and housemothers 1), and the Word of God would abound; so they are so lazy and casual about it, as if everyone wanted to despair of food and temporal goods, that methinks it will come to pass that both schoolmasters, pastors and preachers will have to perish, and go away to crafts or otherwise, that they will let the word go, and resist hunger; just as the Levites had to leave [the] service, and till the ground, when Nehemiah writes [Cap. 13, 10.].

But is it not a pitiful pity that until now a city with four or five hundred citizens could give five, six, seven hundred florins only to the mendicants, without what bishops, officials, and other oppressors, in addition to what other beggars and stationers have stolen. In addition, today such a city should give five or six hundred guilders annually for parret alone; let us not mention the cost of spices, silks, gold, pearls, and other useless things; yes, what beer and wine is wasted! that, if one adds it all up, such a city annually throws far more than a thousand guilders into the dirt. Such a poor, miserable, lost regiment is now in German lands. But if it were to give a hundred guilders or two for a good school and a preacher's chair, yes, one would have to become poor and a beggar, there we have nothing, there avarice and concern for food reigns, there one wants to die of hunger.

5. But what will God say in the end? He will say: "What the wicked fears will come to him" [Proverbs 10:24]. We fear hunger, hunger will strike us, and no care will help us. And because we are so careful without all need, as the unbelieving Gentiles, that we do not promote his word and work with that which he has given us for it.

he will let a time come when we will have enough to worry about, and yet we will not be able to support ourselves. And if it happens, as it should, that a cruel theurge comes, then it serves us right, because we want it that way.

(6) Before, we gave the seducers, priests and monks, who violated our mothers, wives, daughters and sisters and made them whores, who oppressed us with sacrilege and violence, so that we had to die as among the devils, and murdered our bodies and souls with poisonous teachings, and drove us into hell: to them we not only gave enough in the most superfluous way, but also land and people, cities and castles, and made them greater lords than we ourselves are or have. But now God sends us pious, faithful, learned people, who help to discipline and chastity with words and works, and make less fornication through divine marriage, serve us with all diligence in body and soul, and show the right road to heaven, we leave them. And those whom we should fetch with all food from the end of the world, we almost keep, as the rich man kept the poor Lazarus, and are now not able to feed three pious, learned, married 3) preachers, since we have previously received a hundred whoremongers in all splendor. Well, what pleasure God will have in this, we will know shortly. We are not to be told that he will once again plug our ears and not listen. There are still some on earth, if they lay their head, it will be found.

7. nothing better, but only another and worse pabstium set up, which will destroy us more horribly (if it were possible), than this has done; as without doubt will and must happen, if the last day does not strike. We want to be deceived, seduced, maltreated and defiled; as wisdom laments, Proverbs 1:24 ff: "I called, and you refuse; I stretched out my hand, and no one respects it; you spurn all my counsel, and forsake my punishment; I will also laugh at you when you perish, and mock at you when it comes upon you, that

1) "and housemothers" in the Wittenberg and in the Jena, missing in De Wette and in the Latin.

2) Parret (Pirret, Parreth, Biret) berets.

3) Erlanger: "honest". In the other editions: "conjugal", also in Latin.

you fear 2c. Then only shall they cry, but I will not hear them; so shall they eat of their fruits, and be filled with their counsel."

Therefore, I will sing another little song to serve such avarice, if some may still be awakened to help us endure the wrath of God longer. And that shall be this Psalm, which has such a superscription:

A Song of Solomon on High.

(9) Why this psalm and some others are called "songs on high" I do not know. Some think that this is why the priests and Levites sang such psalms when they went up to the temple, on the stairs or steps; that is why they call them step songs or stair songs. But this is not true, nor does it have any basis in Scripture; nor did they sing on the steps, but in the temple.

But if it were up to me and my opinion, I would think, and let myself think, that these psalms are sung with a high voice, as boys or women sing against the male voice, and that the same is called Lamnazeah in some psalms, that is, sung with a high voice, 2c. But because the manner of the Levites to sing has passed away, it is uncertain what we say of it; nor is there great power in it, if only we had the mind of the psalm right.

(10) Solomon made this psalm, and was not enlightened by the Spirit alone, but, as he practiced in daily government and dealt with people, he experienced manifoldly how in vain unbelief labors with worries to provide for the belly, when it is all in God's blessing and keeping. For where he does not bless, no work helps; where he does not protect, no care helps, and so he says:

The 127th Psalm.

1 Where the LORD buildeth not the house, they that build it labor in vain. Where the Lord does not keep the city, the watchman watches in vain.

2 It is in vain that ye rise up early, and delay sitting, and eat hard bread: for to whom he giveth it, he giveth it sleeping.

Behold, the children are the inheritance from the Lord, and the fruit of the body is the reward.

As the arrows in the hand of the mighty, so are the children of the Lord.

(5) Blessed is the man who has his quiver full of them; they are not put to shame when they speak to their enemies in the gate.

First of all, we must know that "to build a house" here does not only mean to erect wood and stones, so that one has walls and roof, chambers and rooms, but rather everything that belongs to a house, which we say in German, Haushalte. As Aristotle writes *de oeconomia*, that is, of housekeeping, which includes wife and child, servant and maid, cattle and fodder; as 2 Mos. 1, 21.

Moses writes that God built the two nurses prosperity and houses, because they feared him, and did not slay the children of Israel, that is, he helped them to get enough men, sons and daughters, and what belonged to them. For Solomon intends to describe a Christian marriage, and instructs everyone how to be a Christian husband and householder.

(2) Reason and the world think that a married life and housekeeping should go on as they do; they want to advise the matter with their toiling and laboring, just as if it were to be arranged by their labor. Solomon says no to this, but moves us up to God, and teaches us to ask and wait for all these things from God with right faith. And Mail also sees it in experience. Sometimes two people who have hardly a shirt to put on get married, and yet they nourish each other so quietly and finely that it is a joy. Again, some bring great goods together, and yet they wear away under their hands, so that they hardly maintain themselves. Item, grab it,

two together out of great love, and go according to their desire and choice 1) and yet do not have a good day with each other afterwards. Some have great diligence and fear that they would like to have children, and do not get them. Some, who do not think about it, get the house full of children. Some of them try to keep house quietly with their servants, and all the misfortune comes. And from that time on, the world is a strange place.

(3) Who is he that troubles so with marriage and husbandry, and turns it so strangely? This is he of whom Solomon says here, "Where the Lord does not keep house, housekeeping is lost. He wants to make and keep this saying true, so he sends such abundance into the world to plague unbelief and disgrace the presumption of reason with jokes and work alone, and bring it to faith.

(4) Now this saying alone shall be sufficient to provoke to marriage, and to comfort all that are therein, and to abate avarice. For this frightens the young people from marriage, that they see how it goes on so strangely, and say: There is much in a house. Item: It is well learned with a wife. 2) That is why they do not see who does it and why he does it, and because human wit and strength cannot see or help here, they do not want to go there.

(5) Then one falls into unchastity, if one remains outside, or into avarice and care, if one enters. But here is the consolation: Let the Lord build the house and keep the house; do not interfere with his work; it is his duty to take care of it, but not yours. For he who is the master of the house and keeps house, let him take care of it. If there is much in a house, then God is greater than a house; he who fills heaven and earth will also be able to fill a house, especially because he takes it over and makes it sing from him.

(6) What wonder is it, then, that much belongs in a house where God is not the master of the house? Because you do not see the one who fills the house

If you look at him, all the angles must seem empty. But when you look at it, you will never know if a corner is empty; it seems to you that everything is full, and everything is full. But if it be not full, it is the fault of thine own face, as of the blind, that he seeth not the sun. But to him who sees aright, God turns back the word, and says not, There is much in one house, but: Much goes out of one house. So we see that stewardship should and must be done in faith, so that there is enough to know that it is not because of what we do, but because of God's blessing and help.

7 But this is not to be understood as if he forbids to work. One must and should work, but do not attribute food and the abundance of the house to work, but only to the goodness and blessing of God. For where one ascribes it to work, avarice and worry immediately arise, and thinks then to acquire much with much work. Thus the contradiction is found, that some labor immensely, and yet have scarcely bread to eat. Others do well with their work and have plenty to eat. This makes everything so that God wants to have the glory, as he alone gives all prosperity. For even if you plow a hundred years and do all the work, you will not bring a stalk out of the ground, but God, without all your work, because you are asleep, makes a stalk out of a grain and many grains on it, as much as he wants.

(8) Therefore Solomon here affirms labor, but rejects care and covetousness. For he does not say that the Lord builds the house, so that no one should work on it; but rather, "Where the Lord does not build the house, those who build it work for nothing. As if he should say: One must work; but that is in vain, where the work is alone, and means to feed itself; it does not do it, God must do it. Therefore work so that you do not work in vain. But then you work in vain if you take care and rely on your work to feed you. Working is your due, but feeding and keeping belong to God alone. Therefore, you must separate these two, "working" and "building a house" or feeding, as far as possible.

1) De Wette: Wohl; Jenaer: wol; Wittenberger: Wal; Erlanger: Wahl. This is not expressed in Latin.

2) This is expressed by the Latin translator thus: vuctn uxoruin, nooepto mnl0 prvituin tieri.

3) "much" is missing from Erlanger.

Heaven and earth, God and man are from each other.

9 Therefore one often reads in the Proverbs of Solomon [Cap. 10, 4. 12, 24. 27. 20, 4.], how the lazy are punished, because they do not want to work, and says: "Lazy hands impoverish, but the industrious hands bring riches. Which and similar sayings are as if it were due to work that one feeds oneself, when there, as 1) also in this Psalm, he says: It is due to God's blessing, and as one says in German: GOtt bescheret, GOtt beräth. That this is the opinion: God commanded Adam to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, Gen. 3, 19, and wants him to work, and without work he will also give him nothing. Again, he will not give him anything by his labor, but only by his goodness and blessing, that labor shall be his exercise in this life to compel the flesh. If he is obedient to him in this, he will also give him enough and feed him well.

10 For God feeds man in no other way than all other animals, as the 147th Psalm, v. 9, says: "He gives food to all flesh, even to the young ravens that call upon him. Item, in the 145th Psalm, v. 15, 16: "All eyes, O Lord, look upon thee, and thou givest them meat in due season; thou openest thine hand, and satisfieth all the beasts with blessings," that is, with abundance and sufficiency. Now no animal labors for its food, but each has its work, after which it seeks and finds its food. The little bird feathers and sings, makes nests and bears young; this is its work, but it does not feed on it. Oxen plow, horses carry and fight, sheep give wool, milk and cheese 2c., this is their work, but they do not feed on it; but the earth bears grass and feeds them by God's blessing, as also Christ Himself Matth. 6, 26. We are called to look at the birds, how they do not sow, reap, nor gather, and yet are fed by God, that is, they work their work, but they do none of the work by which they are fed.

Therefore, man should and must also work.

and do something, but still know that there is another that nourishes him than his work, namely divine blessing; although it seems as if his work nourishes him, because God gives him nothing without his work. Just as 2) the little bird neither sows nor reaps, but it would have to die of hunger if it did not fly and search for food. That it 3) finds food, however, is not its work, but God's goodness. For who has put his food there so that he 4) finds it? Without a doubt God alone, as He says Genesis 1:29, 30: "Behold, I have given you all green things for food, and to all animals." Summa, even if the Scriptures do not teach this, experience also proves it; for where God does not lay down, no one finds anything, and all the world should work and search itself to death. We see this with our eyes, and grasp it with our hands; yet we do not believe. Again, where He [God] does not keep counsel and guard, it does not remain, even if a hundred thousand locks were placed in front of it; it sputters and flies away, so that no one knows where it remains.

1012 For, say, who putteth silver and gold in the mountains, to be found there? Who puts into the fields such great goods as grow out of them corn, wine, and all kinds of fruit, by which all animals live? Does it do man's work? Yes, it does find work, but God must put it there and give it, if it is to find work. Who puts the power into the flesh, so that it grows young, and the world is born full of birds, animals, fish, etc.? Does our work and care do that? Not for a long time yet, God is there before, and gives his blessing secretly inside, so it goes out with all fullness. So we find that all our work is nothing, for God's goods find and keep, but nothing may make or keep.

13) Now we see, as Solomon has so recently taught in this one verse 5) the greatest question among the children of men, since so many books have been written, so many sayings

2) Erlanger: "Gleichwohl". Wittenberger and Jenaer: "Gleich ob wohl". De Wette: "Gleichwie iyoß!".

3) Erlanger: "he"; in the other AusWen: "it".

4) Jenaer and Erlanger: "er"; in dM ätidern Aus" gaben: "es".

5) De Wette and Erlanger: learned. ^

and way to feed the poor belly; which Solomon rejects all in one heap, and takes it all on faith, saying, Thou laborest in vain, if thou laborest to feed thyself, and to build thy house. Thou hast taken much care and trouble; but at the same time with such presumption and unbelief thou shalt provoke God to anger, that thou mayest become the poorer and be utterly ruined, because thou presumeest to do that which is his alone to do. And even if you succeed 1) in becoming rich in all things with such unbelief, it will still bring you great destruction to your soul forever, so that God will blind you and let you 2) prosper in your unbelief. But if thou wilt keep thyself quiet and well fed, and keep the house right, listen: Take a work before thee, that thou mayest work, that thou mayest eat thy bread by the sweat of thy face; after that thou shalt not be anxious how thou shalt be fed, and how such work shall build up and keep thy house; commit all this to God, and let him take care and build, trusting in him; he will set before thee fine and plentiful what thy work shall find and bring to thee; for if he set it not before thee, thou shalt labor in vain, and find nothing.

14 Thus this whole evangelical verse masterfully teaches the faith against the unfortunate avarice and belly care, which now, unfortunately, everywhere hinders the gospel from its fruit. From this verse's understanding, the whole psalm is easy, and the other verses have recently been overflowing as well.

Where the Lord does not guard the city, the watchman guards in vain.

(15) In the first verse he punished covetousness, care, and unbelief in one house in particular; in this verse he does the same to a whole congregation. For a whole congregation is nothing else than many houses together; therein also are comprehended all manner of principalities, dominions, and kingdoms, and what is a common multitude.

16. Now the blind world, because it does not know God and His works, thinks that it is up to their wit, reason and strength that a community or dominion should prosper and remain; therefore they gather great treasures, cast casks, build strong towers and walls, create armor and great supplies, establish wise laws, and attack it bravely and wisely, thus going in their presumption, and not even greeting God for it; just as those who built the tower of Babylon did.

In the meantime God sits above and watches the children of men, how cleverly and boldly they go up 4) and makes them sing from the 33rd Psalm, v. 10: "God destroys the plots of the nations." And again [Ps. 94, 11.]: "God knows the thoughts of men, that they are useless." And again [Ps. 76:13], "He taketh away the courage of princes, and dealeth strangely with kings of the earth." For he maketh such cities and dominions to rise a little, and to begin; but before they look round, he thrusteth them to the ground, and commonly, the greater kingdoms, the sooner. And even if they remain a little in the ascendancy, it is hardly like a beginning in the sight of God, and none has ever come to where it aspires to be.

(18) If you look at the histories of the kingdoms of Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, and all the others, you will find nothing in them but what this verse says, and all their splendor is nothing but a play of God, who made them rise a little, and always overturned one after another; and as they rose up briefly through man's wit and presumption, so they fell down again much more quickly. It was not that there was a lack of people, money, goods and all supplies, but that the right guard stopped guarding, and let it be seen what men's wit and strength were able to do without his guarding and preserving; so it turned out that their thing was nothing but a vain plan and useless undertakings, which they could neither keep nor carry out.

19 They felt and confessed this themselves. For thus the pagan Virgilius of Troy writes that the dead Hector spoke to Aenea

1) Wittenberg and Jena: gelünge; De Wette and the Erlangen: gelinge.

2) "läßt dir's" alone in the Erlanger; "und dir" in the Jenaer, "dir" is missing in the Wittenberger and in De Wette.

3) Walch and De Wette: Pile.

4) Erlanger: "dahin hin" instead of: hinan.

in his sleep: If Troy should have been protected, she would also have been protected by my hand. And Lucanus: *Magnisque negatum stare diu*, it is not given that the great empires exist long. God's work is so public in the daytime; one does not yet recognize it, even if one runs headlong against it. So also the men of war confess that the victory does not lie in the quantity or strength of the army, but, as they say, in luck. But the Scripture says that it is up to God; as Ps. 24, 8. says: "He is the Lord mighty in battle"; and Ps. 147, 10.: "He does not will the strength of the horses"; and Ps. 33, 17.: "Horses do not help with their strength, and the strong may not help them"; also Ecclesiastes 9, 11.: "I saw that to run was not up to the swift, nor battle up to the strong" 2c.

20 With this verse Solomon wants to teach all kings, princes, and rulers, and all those who are to govern, how they should lead and keep a peaceful and blessed government, so that everything goes well. Namely, they should first watch and do diligently as their office demands. For he does not say here that they should not watch, nor be diligent; just as in the previous verse he does not refer to work. St. Paul also says in Romans 12:8 that those who are in charge of others should be careful or diligent, but that their watchfulness should not be in vain and lost, but useful and good.

(21) Secondly, that they place such watch in the faith of God and let Him take care of it, so that they do not presume that their watch and diligence will preserve the city, but are without concern that God will preserve the city, protect the land and the people; let the presumption and concern be only of the watch, and let it proceed freely in faith. For although God does not want anything to be preserved except diligence and watchfulness, He does not want anyone to think that our watchfulness and diligence do such things, which only His goodness and grace do.

(22) For two must surely follow one another, where we watch out of our confidence, either presumption or anxiety. If it goes well and is safe, we are presumptuous in our watchfulness; if it goes badly and will fail, we worry and tremble and doubt. Now

God will not suffer either presumption or anxiety, that we should not be anxious when we are anxious, nor presumptuous when we are anxious, but should watch in a free and right faith, and do what is our duty, and should not be anxious when things go badly, nor presumptuous when things go well.

23 Now no one does this except a believing heart, as David says against fear Ps. 3:7: "I will not fear when many thousands are about me"; and Ps. 27:1, 3: "The Lord protects me; from whom shall I fear? If a war arise against me, I will rely upon him. Again he speaks against presumption Ps. 44, 7.: "I will not rely on my bow, and my sword will not help me."

024 Why then is he called to work and to watch, and to have walls, and armor, and all manner of store, as he called the children of Israel to put on armor, and to fight against the Canaanites? Shall they make no store, and leave the gates and windows open, and not defend themselves at all, but let them stab themselves as on dead bodies, as they did in the first book of the Maccabees, Cap. 2, 38. Certainly not. You have now heard that the authorities should watch, be diligent, and do everything that is their duty: They should close the gates, keep the towers and walls, put on armor, stock up, and act as if there were no God, and they should save themselves and govern themselves; just as a householder should work as if he wanted to feed himself with his work.

(25) But let him beware lest his heart ever trust in such a thing of his, nor 2) presume where it is good, nor care where it is lacking, but let all such readiness and armor be our Lord God's mummery, under which He Himself alone may work and accomplish what we would have; for He commands such armor also for this reason, that He may hide His work under it, and let them that presume run, and strengthen them that presume.

1) Erlanger: "Thüren". We assume that also in the original of 1534 "Thürn" stands, as in the Wittenberg and in the Jena, that is, Thürme, but nevertheless in the Erlanger "Thürme" is indicated as a variant of Walch.

2) Erlanger: also.

3) "alone" is missing in De Wette. In Latin: solus.

so that he will not be tempted. In the same way he led all the wars of David the king in the Old Testament, and of all the people of Israel, and still leads them where there is such faithful authority. Thus he made Abraham, Isaac and Jacob rich through their work, so that it may well be said that the course of the world, and especially of its saints, is God's mummery, under which he hides himself, and rules and rumbles so strangely in the world.

V. 2. It is in vain for you to rise early and go down late and eat the hard bread, for he gives it to his beloved in sleep.

(26) All this is spoken against presumption and diligence. As if to say, "That you rise up early and go down late, thinking that the more you work, the more you will have, the more you will lose; for it must be God's blessing. And even if you gain more than others, who are not so anxious for good and for protection, it is not so far off as the others, who are not so anxious, and yet disappears under the hands, as the 37th Psalm, v. 16, says: "It is better for the righteous a little, than great goods for the wicked"; and Solomon in his Proverbs Cap. 15, 17: "It is better to have herbs with love, than a fat ox with hatred."

(27) But that this is the opinion, and that he does not here forbid labor or diligence, is proved by the fact that he says, "And eat hard bread. This is saying so much: You make your bread and food hard and sour for yourselves, and yet it is not the work that is to blame, but your anxious, unbelieving heart, which does not believe that God will feed you, but rather leers and drives, and wants to have its chest, bag, cellar and floor full beforehand, and does not rest until it knows that there is food in store, which it may not consume for many years. But he who believes in God, does not care for the next 1) morning, lets him be satisfied today, and does his work with joy and a quiet heart, keeping himself as Christ says in the Gospel, Matth. 6, 34: "Be not careful for the morrow; for the morrow will have its evil, it is enough that every day has its evil."

Behold, their food is not hard nor sour for them. For though they eat their bread outwardly by the sweat of their face, yet they do it inwardly with faith and a glad conscience.

28. After that he concludes how God gives all this, and says: Sic dabit dilectis suis somno, all these things, both building a house and preserving a city, he gives to his beloved ones as in sleep, that is, he lets them work and be industrious, but still in such a way that they neither worry nor presume, but go there happily, and take on nothing, let it be ordered to him, and live there quietly, and with a calm heart, like one who sleeps safely and sweetly, and also does not take on anything, and yet remains finely preserved and alive. For they have enough, and must have enough, and be preserved, because they give it to God, as the 55th Psalm, v. 23, says: "Cast your care upon the Lord, and he shall feed you"; and 1 Pet. 5, 7: "Cast all your care upon him, and know that he careth for you." It is only a matter of worry, stinginess and unbelief, not of work.

See, the children are the inheritance from the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is the reward.

29 This is spoken entirely in the Hebrew way. Inheritance from the Lord" and "reward" are one thing, just as "children" and "fruit of the womb" are one thing, and thus means: "What is the use of your almost worrying and fretting about how you will get over your goods and possessions? For children, and that which is born of women, are not in your power, which belong to a house and a city. For if there were no children and no fruit of the womb, neither house nor city would remain. If these are God's inheritance and reward, that is, God's gifts and presents, for which you so nearly care, and if all the world were to join forces with all its might, it would not make a child to be conceived or born in some woman's womb, but it is all God's work alone; why then do you think and care for goods and goods, if you do not have that for which you seek such goods and goods? So then a householder and master should reasonably say: I will work and do my own;

But he who creates and makes the children in the house and the people in the city (who are all fruits of the flesh) will also nourish and preserve them. Behold, thy work shall not be grievous, neither shall his watch be grievous, and he shall walk in faith.

30 Christ also touched on this in Matth. 6, 25 (as well as almost the entire Psalm), when he says: "Is not the body more than the clothes, and the soul more than the food? As if he should say, "Are not the children and the fruits of the body in your care? For who can tell how it is that all the children of men come from the flesh of women? Who has hidden such a great number of people in the poor flesh, and brings it out 1) so wonderfully, without only one, who gives the children for inheritance, and the fruit of the womb for the reward of his loved ones, as in sleep? God gives overnight, they say, and is ever truly true.

V. 4. As the arrows in the hand of the mighty, so are the children of youth.

He compares the children and people to the arrows in the hand of a strong hero; he shoots the arrows when and where he wants. So we also see how God deals with us. Behold, how strangely he mates man and woman together, that no man should be unaware of it: how do they come to strange states and beings, since they have never struggled to see miracles in them, and commonly go out differently than their father and mother, and also each one has thought for himself. As if God should confess this verse by deed, and say: I will destroy all men's attempts, and deal with the children of men according to my will, that they may be in my hand, as arrows in 2) a strong sneeze. What is the use of much worrying and plotting, how it shall be with us, if it will not be otherwise than as he wills? Therefore, it is best to work and let him take care of the future.

32 And especially he calls "the children of youth", as those who are not yet householders, nor yet watchmen in the city, whom we mean entirely.

He still leads them in the house and city as he wills, and arranges with them what he wills, so that we may see that he provides for all things, and will leave us nowhere but work, so that we do not think that God rules only the young children in the cradle, and lets the great ones use their reason and free will; indeed, he rules the great ones (he speaks here) as mightily as the young ones; they are arrows in his hand, they must weave and drive where and how he wills. With him, reason and unreason, heaven and earth, young and old, wise and wise men are equal.

(33) Yes, he deals more strangely with the prudent and the sensible, and has much more to do with them, that he may make fools of their reasoning, and lead them otherwise than they intend. Therefore this verse says that he does not have the children and fruits of the body, which he calls God's inheritance and gift, but "the children of youth," who are now great and sensible, in his hand, as a giant has his arrows, although it seems as if he has them least in his hand, and lets their reason and wit master them, and waits for the children. All things must be done, that he may take from us the rule and care of us, and ward us off, that we may know how he himself alone rules us and cares for us, and makes us work and do our thing.

V. 5 Blessed is the man who has his quiver full of them; they are not put to shame when they speak to their enemies in the gate.

He desires that such youth, given and known by God, be many. For that is the way of the world. This is also true, if all things are to be counseled, then the youth must be drawn and kept according to it, who is to lead us after the rule and life on earth. Just as the giant is well established and equipped, who has his quiver full of arrows, so is the master of the house and the city well provided for, which has plenty of such youth, given by God; for there God Himself keeps house and guards the city.

But such great grace is not without persecution, for where there is divine, there must also be diabolical temptation. The

1) "brings" - brings them.

2) "in" is missing from De Wette.

Unbelief and avarice of the world cannot suffer such things" that mau teaches or lives like this; therefore such landlords and cities will not remain without enemies who blaspheme and disgrace them. But against this there is the consolation that they will finally stand with honor and "put their enemies to shame in the gate," that is, publicly. But he mentions neither armor nor weapons, but only the word, and says: "They will speak to their enemies in the gate"; as if he should say: With the doctrine they will stand, that it is right, how hard also the opponents dispute it.

(36) These things I have written as an exhortation to your love, my dear friends in Christ, that your hearts may be the more diligent with us, that the gospel may abound and be fruitful.

Let it be with us all, in all understanding and good works, against which the fruit of sorrowful unbelief, avarice, struggles so mightily. May our dear Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and help us. For if we are still weak, that we cannot leave the care of our belly, how shall we bear the rage of the world, death, dishonor and all other misfortunes? Yes, how will we stand, when now the false spirits come upon us, which are already stirring and rising? But may God, the Father of all mercy, who has put His word and work upon you, guard your minds and hearts in the simple and unadulterated knowledge of Jesus Christ, our Savior, to whom be praise and thanksgiving forever and ever, amen.

33. interpretation of the 147th Psalm.*)

provided in December 1531, dated January 1532.

The 147th Psalm, *Lauda Jerusalem.*

To the strict and honorable Hans Löser, hereditary marshal of Saxony, my favorable lord and good friend.

Grace and peace in Christ, strict, honorable, dear lord and friend. When I was with you to dispel my headaches and weakness by moving my body, and you showed me great honor and friendship, and also took me with you on your hunt, I also kept my spiritual hunt on the wagon, and caught the 147th Psalm, *lauda Jerusalem*, with its interpretation, which is the most fun hunt and the noblest game for me. Now that I have brought it home and cut it up, I have given you the same thing.

I would like to report this to you, so that I do not secretly keep such goods, gained from your soil, with an evil conscience, and would not only be found ungrateful, but also harmful. Send E. G. the same, as much as is his, completely and keep it for me completely. For such game can be divided wonderfully among friends, so that each gets it completely and nothing is lost to the other. E. G. would accept such a thing as a favor, for I am willing to serve you. Hereby God bless, together with your dear house vine and grapes. Amen. Saturday after St. Lucy's [16 Decembers 1531.

D. Martinus Luther.

*The reason for the interpretation of this psalm was asked by Tauber himself in his short letter to Dans van Veier. Lie went, as Zen. V, Nil will report!, in" Zauuar l'E in print under the title: "D-r < X l.X'l l Psalm, tlauda Zerusalem. Interpreted by D. Mart. tauber. Wittenberg. M.D.XXXII." At the end : "Printed at Wittenberg by ssans weis. M.D.XXXII." Zn the Erlanger another single edition is listed under the same title, but without indication of drt and printer. Zn the Lammlungen: in the Wittenberg , l55a>, vol. III. bl. .Xbct; in the Jena 115">u>, vol. X'. Bl. lUl l>: in the Altenburger, vol. V, T. 055; in the tleiv ziger, vol. X'l, L. 557 and in the Erlanger, vol. 41, 2. 151. The attribution is also found in De Wette. Vol. l X'. L. all and, according to taubers Driginal, in tioldc, X unb ntn, L. 174. According to the latter we bade the same improved. The Erlangen edition asked for the tert of the Lchrift after the first single edition, therefore we have improved our text darern after it.

The 147th Psalm.*)

12. Praise, O Jerusalem, the LORD; praise, O Zion, your God.

013 For he maketh strong the bars of thy gates, and blesseth thy children within.

14. he makes peace within thy borders, and satisfieth thee with the best of wheat.

15. he sends his speech from earth, his word runs fast.

16 He giveth snow like wool, he scattereth tires like ashes.

17. he casts his locks like morsels; who can stay from his frost?

18. he speaks, and it melts; he blows his wind, and it thaws.

019 He shewed Jacob his word, and Israel his statutes and his judgments.

020 He will not do this to the Gentiles, nor will they know his judgments. Hallelujah.

Because the damned world, by the effect of its lord and prince, the devil, is so shamefully ungrateful, and contemptuously abuses all of God's graces and goods, both spiritual and physical, and also acts contrary to and displeases His divine words and commandments, until its hour comes to pay, I have now taken it upon myself to sing and read this psalm to honor and thank God with it. Perhaps there will be a pious Christian or two who will join me in praising and singing, so that ingratitude and contempt will not be found in this life.

First of all, this psalm is a praise and thanksgiving for the bodily benefits of God, which God gives peace and fruit on earth, that it is called a good year or good time, in which one can nourish and govern oneself. For we must confess that this thirty-first year is a good year (who knows when it will come to be more good), and yet there is no one in the world who can thank God for it, but it is needed for avarice in the most stingy way,

even to the persecution and destruction of the gospel and of all God's honor. But the world is struggling for its final damnation; this will certainly hit it suddenly and before it knows it.

V. 12. Praise, Jerusalem, the Lord; praise, Zion, your God.

(3) He does not ask for great sacrifices for his good deeds, nor does he ask for precious jewels that would confess much; indeed, he asks for the very easiest work in return, namely, praise and thanksgiving, which have neither effort nor cost. For what is easier to do than to say: Praise be to you, merciful God? Item: I thank you for your goods and gifts. Item: You are a pious, faithful God and a merciful father rc. No one is allowed to run to Rome, not even to stir his body. And summa, what trouble and work is it to read or hear such a psalm? We cannot yet do such easy service. What then shall we do in greater and more grievous services than these, to keep the ten commandments, and for his sake to suffer all evil, to risk life and limb, goods and honor and to him? Truly, he who cannot or will not say *grace* to God will never do or suffer anything for the sake of God.

(4) And it is a great shame (where we might be ashamed) that we must first of all be stirred up to thanksgiving like the slothful, and awakened like the sleeping; and also count, name, and model the benefits, since we are daily showered with them, and use them without ceasing, and live by them, that we should stir up and admonish ourselves without psalms and foreign remembrance, to thanksgiving, as if moved, enticed, and inflamed by the benefits themselves. But there is nothing to be done; we must be started and urged to praise the Lord, and to this end we must speak the word and put it into our mouths, as this psalm does. Still our

*) The first eleven verses" of the 147th Psalm of our Bible form the 146th Psalm in the Vulgate, whereas the following verses, the text of our Scripture, form the 147th Psalm in the Vulgate. In the original, no verse number is set.

The lazy prankster is not interested in such a light, merry, happy little work, and beautiful little service. Let us be ashamed, so that we will not be frightened or turn red when we hear or read a verse in the Psalms.

5. but this is much more shameful, that we must also be called the benefactor, and say to Jerusalem, Dear, praise the Lord; and to Zion, Dear, praise your God. For he is so well worth it, and is a cheap and beautiful service 2c. For many are those who daily need all the benefits of God, and see and feel that they have great gifts and all good things; but they do not even think from whom they have them, or that it is God who gives them them, but accept them as if they came from nowhere, or as if they had acquired them by their work, diligence, and wisdom, and at the same time regard them as if God must give them them, and they owe no thanks for them.

No animal lives so shamefully, not even a sow, as the world lives. For a sow knows the woman or maid from whom she gets the marc, bran and gestrod to eat, runs after her and screams at her. But the world knows and respects nothing of God, who benefits it so abundantly and effusively, let alone that it should thank and praise Him for it. Therefore, one can see how this light and bright psalm, which is daily howled and blasphemed by all the clergy in the churches, nevertheless remains so unknown and misunderstood by the blind and perverse people that Jerusalem and Zion themselves have to be stirred up with it. What good should Babylon and Sodoma do? They do not even want to recognize God and His gifts and give thanks to Him.

V. 13: For he maketh strong the bars of thy gates, and blesseth thy children within.

(7) Then he began to number and to name the benefits. And the first is the protection, that he keeps and guards the gates of the city, so that one can live safely and quietly in the city. But how many citizens or people have ever thought in their lifetime that their protection and safety in the city is a gift from God? What farmer in a village thinks that God's gift is a gift?

that he sits so safely behind his fence with his servants? If he had to wait all hours for thieves and robbers to run through his house, or if he had to wait all hours in war for his house and farm to be burned down and for him to be beaten and tortured, then he would learn to sing this psalm and say: "Oh, how blessed are they! Oh what a great gift of God it is that one may eat his morsel of bread and drink his drink of water with safety and peace!

But now such divine protection and security is there with full power, no one respects it. Yes, for the fact that we should thank God, we go to, and abuse everything most wantonly; pursue God's word, are unruly and disobedient to the authorities, cheat and deceive among ourselves, set up and make theft, usurp, and live as if we ourselves were God and lords on earth. Therefore, God must again sometimes send fools with pistons, war, thieves, robbers, riots, fire, water, pestilence and other calamities among us, so that He may teach us to understand what protection and security is, and how it is such a noble gift of God; otherwise we will never learn.

(9) By the word "bars" one must understand not only the iron bars that the blacksmith can make, but by synecdoches, and by such a few pieces also everything else that helps to keep the protection, as there are good regiment, good city law, good order, serious punishment, pious, faithful, wise lords. For the iron bars alone will not do it, that safe protection is in the city. That is why in the prophets the princes and lords are sometimes called the bars of the city or the country.

(10) And summa, it is not man's wit nor strength, but God's gift, where there is protection and security; there must be more to it than the iron bars or blacksmith. God Himself must make the bolts strong; and as the 127th Psalm, v. 1: "Where God does not guard the city, the guardian watches in vain." Many stronger cities have been won and destroyed, which were thought to be invincible. But when the hand of him who makes the bars firm was taken away, they perished. How often has the great and almost omnipotent

City of Babel so shamefully won! How are the empires of Assyria, Persia, Greece, Rome so easily and recently disturbed! Nothing holds without what God holds.

(11) But again, God would not have him tempted, and would not have a gate, a bar, or do anything to protect the city, just as if the gates were to remain open, the walls demolished, all armor and defenses slackened, all order and punishment abolished, and thus the city protect itself, or let God alone rule and do it. Not so, but you shall build and make bars, fortify the city and arm yourself, establish good order and justice as best you can. But see thou, when thou hast done this, that thou trust not thyself, saying, Now I sit secure and firm, and all is well, as the heathen did; as the king of Babylon (Dan. 4:27) praised his city Babylon, and Arbaces his city Ecbatana, and had to learn otherwise; but write this rhyme upon it, Now help, O God, or we are hereby unhelped. He could give you grain and fruit without your plowing and planting, but he will not; so he will not let your plowing and planting give you grain and fruit, but you shall plow and plant, and say a blessing on it, and pray thus: Now consult God, now give grain and fruit, dear Lord, our plowing and planting will not give it to us, it is your gift. Just as children are accustomed to fasting and praying, and to spreading out their clothes at night, so that the Christ Child (or St. Nicholas) will give them presents; but where they do not pray, nothing is given, or a rod and horse droppings are given.

(12) What is all our work in the field, in the garden, in the city, in the home, in the battle, in the government, but such child's work, by which God wants to give His gifts in the field, at home and everywhere? These are our Lord God's vestments, under which he wants to be hidden and do everything. If Gideon had not done this and gone to battle against Midian, the Midianites would not have been defeated, and God could have defeated them without Gideon. He could have created children without men and

wife, but he will not do it, but gives man and wife together, so that [it] appears as if man and wife do it, and yet he does it hidden under such larva. One says: *Dat Deus omne bonum, sed non per cornua taurum*, God bestows all good, but you must take hold and take the ox by the horns, that is, you must work, and thus give God cause and a larva.

13 Therefore the psalm says: "He makes firm. What? "The bars of thy gates." He will and can make them strong; but there shall be thy bars, and thy gates, which he may make strong; without thy bars he will not make them strong; and yet it is written, that the bars are not strong in themselves. Therefore both shall be there: thou shalt make and have bars and gates, but he will make them strong. Thou shalt not make them strong; so he will not make bars. Now divide it rightly. Make the latch and the gate, and let him make them strong. Work thou, and let him bring forth fruit. Govern thou, and let him add happiness. War thou, and let him give the victory. Preach thou, and let him make the hearts devout. Take thou husband or wife, and let him beget children. Eat and drink thou, and let him feed and strengthen thee; and so henceforth, in all our doing, let him do it all in and through us, and let him alone have the glory of it, as Paul says 1 Cor. 3:7: "It is neither the planter nor the waterer that is anything, but GOD that giveth the prosperity."

14 Now all this is said against those who tempt God and will do nothing, and think that God should give them and do what they desire without work and diligence. To whom this proverb is rightly said: Rely on it, and do not bake. Item: Wait until a roasted chicken flies into your mouth. For God does not want lazy idlers, but one should work faithfully and diligently, each according to his profession and office, so he will give the blessing and prosperity to it.

15 Again, it is also said to the presumptuous, who think that it comes, or must come, and be acquired by their diligence and work, by their art and jokes, do not ask about God. But the right means is not to be lazy and idle, nor to work on one's own.

He must not rely on work and doing, but work and do, and yet wait for everything from God alone. This much is said: everything must be done in faith and trust in God; and whether he sees that happiness sometimes befalls the lazy or the presumptuous, do not fret about it. For it does not last, nor does it remain, nor does it inherit, and finally perishes; as we see many examples before our eyes of how quickly great estates have perished, and perish daily.

16 The other blessing is happiness, that the city is full of people, rich, well inhabited and built, which is a blessing of God, and a fruit of peace and protection, and not of our power nor art. For in war there is none; so also without it a city poor, thin of people, and badly built, is an unblest city (to speak of temporal blessing), and half cursed. Thus also the 127th Psalm, v. 3, says that children and young, strong people are God's gifts. And in the prophets God is always threatening, when he is angry with a city, that he will make it a desert, desolate, and without people or children. For children here are not only called Hanse children, but city children, that is, all who live inside and are protected, whether young or old, male or female, spiritual or secular, with everything they have and acquire.

17 This blessing, that a city is full of people, includes all other gifts that are necessary for the preservation of the people, such as house, farm, money, clothes, cattle, wife, children, servants. Item, all kinds of crafts and trades, so that there is no shortage, but daily in such everything better, increase and multiply. For where such things diminish or fail, the city also perishes and becomes desolate, since this temporal life cannot do without them.

18. But how many people are there in such a city who thank God for such blessings and good fortune? Yes, how many are there who recognize that these are God's blessings and gifts? How many people here in Wittenberg have ever thanked God just for the two waters, Faulbach and Frischbach, from which they have used and drunk many a happy drink for so many years, and have used them so abundantly for all the necessities in the house, that such a use cannot be compared with any other.

How much more money is to be paid? I will be silent of the other gifts and blessings, to house, farm, child, livestock 2c.

19. The devil is good for that, that such grateful people should be many, but so one must do, despise God in all this, and not know such benefits and blessings, but rather think it is our and our doings and work's fault, we have acquired and won it; After that, we will most shamefully abuse everything against God and our neighbor, be proud, flaunt, oppress, cheat, translate, deceive, and exercise all courage, until God is awakened to our wickedness and sends war or tyrants upon us, who will give us our deserved reward, and take such blessings and God's gifts, and make a miserable, poor city out of it. Then we will learn how great a blessing and God's gift it was at that time to have a city full of people and well built and well cared for.

20. although one finds such great people, who are sorry when a city is so blessed that it is full of people 2c. For they would rather that the city remain thin and empty, so that they alone might grow fat, fat and large in it; for where there are many people in it, their avarice and their courtliness are gone from them, and others will also eat with them and feed themselves beside them. These reckon and measure the thing exactly according to the persons and goods, do not think that the goods of all cities on earth are much, much too small for their persons, who are inside; but God's blessing (speaks David here), that does it. As also the proverb teaches: The more people, the more luck.

(21) And tell me how it is done: A day laborer has had to earn about a penny a day, which, counting holidays and other idle days, is nowhere worth fifteen guilders a year; from this he must feed himself with his wife and five or six children. Now you calculate how much comes on a head of the day to spend, to clothe, to warm 2c. The children are still as fat as snails, and no hunger can be seen from their eyes, that even princes and lords' children are hardly so fat. Must one not take here this psalm: "He blesses your children

inside"? It is true, if one lies imprisoned, or where one wants to starve one and takes what is his, as now the peasants and the nobility, also tyrants, do to the priests, there must come out a lean and scrawny body. So surely the blessing of God, and not our work, diligence and wit, goes over a city, since it is full of people and is fed and increases 2c.

V. 14. He makes peace within thy borders, and satisfieth thee with the best of wheat.

The third benefit is "peace," that there is not only protection and happiness in the city, but also peace and good times in the countryside around, so that one can safely walk, farm, plant, graze and advertise. This includes pious, loyal neighbors and obedient nobility and peasants. As it is said: "No one can have peace longer than his neighbor wants it. Item: One neighbor owes another a fire. It is not the smallest misfortune on earth to have unfaithful, evil neighbors. For count from the peasants to the emperor what harm, treachery, hindrance, scorn, and all manner of heartbreak one peasant can do to another, one citizen to another, one lord and prince to another, one king to another; that even among the Jews is a curse: God give thee a wicked neighbor.

23 Again, it is not of the least grace to have pious and faithful neighbors on earth, for they can do all good; and thus peace is better confirmed than if a city of all the world had power around it, and were guarded with iron walls. This is also said by the pagans, as Terentius: "Whoever thinks that a dominion is more lasting, which must be maintained by force, than which remains with one another through friendship, I consider to be a vain error. And Aristotle: What is maintained by force, that does not have the duration. Cause, one says: No one was ever so evil, a more evil one came over him. And again: Curt is also evil, and: Beyond the mountain there are also people. The empire of Babel was evil, but the Persians were even more evil and tore it apart. The Persian Empire was evil, but Alexander was even more evil, and ate the Persians. The Romans were

But the Litten, the Wends and the Turks were even more evil and plundered it honestly. The Turk is now evil, but where the world will stand longer, he must also serve an evil.

(24) Therefore the wise Roman Cato, when he teaches housekeeping, says that we should be diligent and keep ourselves in such a way that our neighbors love us and are favorable to us; this helps to nourish us. Also the holy scripture praises such grace, Sir. 25, 1. 2.: "Three things I like to see, which please both God and man. When brothers are in harmony, when neighbors love one another, when husband and wife are at ease with one another." And Solomon also praises it, Proverbs 27:10: "It is better to have a neighbor who dwells with us than a brother who dwells afar off." What good is it for a man to have a thousand brothers who are all far away from him? I would take for them all one good neighbor, and for their sake I would not like to anger or despise one neighbor.

(25) But how we are to hold ourselves so that our neighbors will be kind and favorable to us is not to be told here. The heathen and reason say: It is patientia et beneficentia, if one is patient, and does not reckon and reward so exactly, where they do us harm, but looks through the fingers for it, and shows oneself friendly towards them with words and deeds. And it is well said, and is also the teaching of Scripture, that one should love one's neighbor, even one's enemy. But one also finds rough neighbors who are so full of hatred and envy that they become worse through patience and kindness. That is why it is said above all human art and strength: "God makes peace within your borders. And it is nothing else but God's gift where such peace is in the land. He must hold the hearts and fists of the neighbors, guide and turn them to peace, and control and ward off the unruly.

(26) It is true, as it was said above, that we should be diligent to keep peace in the land. Just as we should plow and sow so that our grain may grow, so we should be patient and kind to our neighbors so that peace may remain. Yea, the lords also shall till the borders and the roads, and be in

Take up arms against the enemies and evil neighbors. But when all this has been done, one should say: "Well, I have done everything that serves peace, which is also part of the defense, but with this nothing is done; Lord God, now give your blessing to this, and make peace within our borders! For our doing will not produce anything, our farming and building will not bring forth such fruit, even though we gladly do what we please. Behold, such faith, in your diligence and work for peace, God will bless, and give and keep His gift of peace.

But where are the people (that we return to the Psalm) who thank God for such a gift of peace? Yes, where are they who recognize it as God's gift and do not despise God in addition? We need it for our own pleasure and will, and act as if such peace were our own inheritance, in which we may live and do as we please, both against God and against men. For it is unspeakable how lecherous and piggish the peasants have now become through this peaceful time of several years; their skin almost itches, like a sow fattened for slaughter, as if they did not want to and could not suffer or bear the good days any longer, nor will they let up until the butcher comes upon them and makes sausages out of them. God must receive such 1) thanks that he has given such fine peace to such boys; but see how long he will suffer it.

(28) And our disciples of the nobility, especially the pusillanimous Scharrhansen, should they thank God for such peace? That would be a disgrace to all your nobility, but it is they themselves who make peace in all borders. And David was not right in singing such a song of God; he should have sung it of the nobility, and dressed and adorned them with such a beautiful psalm. Because he did not do that, they take the psalm cheaply and adorn themselves in it. For they think that they are lords, both over peace and war; no prince nor lord can advise them. Even if God were there with all the angels, they must

protect and save, and keep peace, otherwise God Himself would probably be expelled from heaven. They are not allowed to have either luck or blessing; it is enough that they can throw down the knife, and curse potz Marter! Then there is peace, war and everything as they want it.

(29) I am very much afraid, however, that such wicked men, blasphemers, and pouncers will suddenly awaken God, so that he will take this psalm away from them and give it to him alone, and then let them see what they will accomplish with their banging and scratching, without his gifts; so that they will learn, as well as others, that God is the one who makes peace within our borders. And if it comes to that, that they should defend us, protect us and make peace, then God be merciful to us, and only take us away forever. For surely the sheep is commanded to the wolf, who shall make peace for it, and the poor sinner to the devil, whom he shall help from death.

Finally, here you will hear who wants to learn that we should work for peace with patience and friendship toward our neighbors, also with tilling land and roads, with cities and borders against the enemies; but by no means insist on it nor defy it, but rely on God that he will give us peace and keep it where we are worthy of it; where not, that no armor will help. Yes, our very rulers, who are supposed to give us peace, are supposed to be the first and the worst to inflict all plagues and misfortunes on us; as we have heard that they did at Vienna, and in all places where they are put down. This makes them ignorant of God and His gifts, and they insist on themselves. Therefore they cannot do any righteous work for peace, but must do the opposite, even as they boast that they are making peace.

(31) And among these peace shall be counted all other things that pertain unto peace, such as health of the body against pestilence, water, fire, poison, and all manner of plagues and sickness. For where such calamities reign, the land is not at ease, and the devil nevertheless delights in calamity and harm. And is vain God's gift,

1) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers; Erlanger: Solcher.

and not our prudence or work, where pestilence and diseases and other plagues of the devil do not rage daily. And if God did not also create peace here, all our pharmacies, physicians, art, help and advice would be far too little for us. Although we should use these means and arts and keep them with diligence, we should not rely on them, as has been said, but always speak the blessing: Lord God, give us grace and peace for this, we have done our part; we have planted, give us prosperity, as said above [§ 13].

The fourth benefit is the daily bread, when he says, "He satisfies you with the best wheat," that is, he gives you abundant grain and fruit of the field, and all the necessities of food and drink to nourish the body. He also says that he does not give grain alone, but adipem, choice and sweet wheat; and does not give alone, but satisfies fully and abundantly. By this he means that he gives enough to eat and drink; as St. Paul also says 1 Tim. 6:17: "Who giveth us all things abundantly to enjoy." And this is also true. For every year so much grows (where God is gracious and will not punish with hunger) that [it] cannot consume the world, but much remains over. Even though there is never enough for miserliness, and if the earth were like grain, and the water like wine, and the mountains like gold, they could not satisfy a miserly man if he had it all by himself.

33. But who believes that God's gift is what we have so abundantly in grain and wine and all kinds of fruit? Where are they who thank and praise him for it? Yes, they feast and boast; again, they practice usury with it, and make a great deal of time, and exploit the poor and everyone; and we deal with it as if we ourselves, and not God, had created it, there is no thought of God. Just as now the peasants and noblemen are doing their willfulness with their setting up. They have the land and the fruits inside, and now they also want to have the money, so that other people have nothing, and they alone have everything. Well, whether they divide rightly in this, it will be found in time that they themselves shall have nothing; let them go and do.

(34) We are to learn here, and praise and thank God that He makes grain grow, and recognize that it is not our work but His blessing and His gifts that grain and wine and all kinds of fruit grow, from which we eat and drink, and have every need; as the Lord's Prayer also proves, when we say, "Give us our daily bread. Here we confess with the word "give" that it is God's gift, and not our creatures. And if he did not give, not a grain would grow, and our cultivation would be in vain. Yes, it is such a strong gift that it must be wonderfully preserved by God's power until we get it and enjoy it. For how soon could all the grain in the earth rot, freeze, rot, be eaten by worms, be drowned by water? And if it already grows, how soon could it be spoiled with heat, weather, hail, eaten by beetles and other animals? And who can tell all the journeys that the grain and wine must endure before it reaches the ground? There it is also eaten by worms and flies away. The devil would not let a stalk or leaf rise and grow where God did not prevent him.

Therefore, when we look at a field or grain, we should not only recognize God's goodness, but also his power, and thus think: O dear grain, how out of rich, mild goodness God gives you to us so fully; but also, how with great power he protects you from the hour you are sown until you come to the table, how even through countless journeys of all misfortune you have come! How mightily he snatches you through all the devils' fingers and hands, which grasp at you, shoot and strike, so that they destroy you and kill us with hunger. Yes, yes, we should think so? We have other things to do than to recognize such grace and power of God. It is we who have done the most with the grain. If we had not worked, God could not have given anything. So we go about with hard sticks and blocks, and in the meantime we practice usury and miserliness and quarreling 1) with such mighty, gracious gifts of God, persecuting both God and man with them.

1) Quoß - to do something unethically; Low German: quasen.

But a pious, believing heart sees here how our work of plowing, sowing and the like would be lost if God's gift did not help us. Although we should do such work diligently and seek our food from the earth, Genesis 3:17, 23, we should not rely on it as if we found it with our own hands. It takes more than our hand. God must give blessing and prosperity to it, after which it is also powerfully preserved against all devils, not only this fourth benefit, but also all three mentioned above. For the devil does not grant us any of them; God must give them and preserve them against his wickedness.

V. 15. He sends his speech to the earth, his word runs fast.

Here he shows the golden art by which God performs and gives all such benefits; he says: it costs God no more than a word, which means: *fiat*, Gen. 1, 3. For he may not use a hammer, anvil or tongs to make the bolts strong. He must not use stone or lime to make peace. Neither may he add wives, merchants or minters, that he may make the children rich and happy within. Neither may he add plow or harrow, that he may fill us with wheat; but he saith unto bars: Be firm, and they will be firm; and to the citizens, Be rich and blessed, and they will be rich and blessed; and to the borders: Peace be with you, so there is peace; and to the earth, Bear wheat, so it bears wheat; as the 33rd Psalm, v. 9. also saith, "When he speaketh, there it is," and Ps. 78:45, "He spake, then came Undevil."

38 So here also: "He sends his speech to the earth", that is, he speaks to the earth and everything that is on earth. In the same way the 107th Psalm, v. 20, speaks of those who are deathly ill and yet recover: "He sends his word and makes them well"; that is, he says: "Be well, and you will be well"; so that he needs no medicine, but he makes them well with his word. Item, Ps. 148, 8.: "Fire, hail, snow, vapor, and tempest wind his words do"; that is, they do as he speaks with them. His speaking or speaking is as much as creating; as we read Gen. 1, 3. that he created the world through his

Speak. And Paul Rom. 4, 17: "He calls to that which is not, that it must be or become."

39. and "his word", he says, "runs fast", that is, it happens quickly and as soon as he wills. And as soon as he speaks, there it is, as Gen. 1, 3: "God spoke, and it came to pass." It is not such a rotten, sick, dead word as the word and commandment of men is; even though they say and command a great deal, nothing or even little happens; for even the word or commandment of kings and lords happens little and slowly. It does not run thus; it creeps and creeps with good leisure, as one says: It is the commandment of the Lords; that is, it does not happen. Yes, if God's word does not come and say, "What you call king and prince, let it be done," nothing will come of it. He must add his word to it, and give power to the prince's commandments, and fear and obedience to the subjects, otherwise it will be called and remain a lord's commandment.

(40) But when God says to the earth, Green, and it shall green quickly; Let the stalk grow, and it shall grow; Bear wheat, and it shall bear wheat; and all things come to pass quickly and speedily, as we see before our eyes, that his word walketh not, but runneth; yea, it leapeth, and doeth it in a leap, and in a moment. So when he calls for peace within the borders, peace is immediately there, which no other prince's command can create or maintain. When he blesses the people in the city, and calls them lucky, then happiness strikes quickly, since otherwise no trade nor advertising can help. When he calls the bars to be strong, the city is well guarded and protected, since otherwise no wall or fortress can protect or guard.

41 Therefore, this verse confirms what we said above [§ 7 ff.] about the four benefits, that they are not and should not be called our art or strength, but God's benefits. And if God did not create everything through His word, all our effort and work would be of no avail. For with all man's labor we could not bring a stalk out of the ground, nor raise it, nor feed it with wheat; nor defend a dog, nor make peace with it.

to create in the borders. Nor to gain a penny, except to become rich and blissful. Nor to ward off a fly, except to keep the bars firm. It says, "His word", and not our hand; "His speech", and not our art, creates it and brings it about. So this verse shows the reason why David attributes the four benefits not to us men but to God, for which he calls us to give thanks. The reason, he says, is that you do not do it, nor can you do anything, but he says it, so you have it; his word and his command create all that you have.

(42) It is also comforting for us to have our faith stirred up and strengthened. For since we hear that we have such a God, who creates all things and does them so easily that it costs him no more than a word, we should gladly trust him with all our heart and soul, and believe that he can and will give and help all things, against all the gates of hell. O! whoever could believe that it is true that God can do everything with one word and so easily, of whom would he be afraid? if the Turk had besieged him, or even the whole world, what could they do to him, if he held God's word so mighty and powerful? [Surely before such a man the Turk should be as dim as a fly. But we do not believe it, but look at our strength; what we find that it is not able to do, we consider it as if God could not do it either, and so we despair and despair. Again, what we are able to do or have, we do not believe that God has created and given it to us. Oh, we are unbelieving and ungrateful, shameful, wicked children.

V. 16. 17. He gives snow like wool, he scatters tires like ashes. He casts locks like morsels; who can remain before his frost?

(43) Here he introduces an example of winter to confirm his teaching. Winter is like summer in that it makes the land look desolate and barren, bearing neither grain nor fruit, so that it seems as if nothing can ever grow from the earth. And he who had not seen winter before might well despair, and think, heaven

and earth had become hostile to us, and wanted to kill us with hunger and frost; or [there] should probably be a Manichaeus belief, as if there were another God of summer, who would be gracious and kind to increase and nourish men, and another God of winter, who would be angry and wicked to starve and destroy men. But now it is the same one God, both in summer and winter, although he is much different in winter than in summer. The winter looks like death, wrath and all evil, against the summer, which looks like life, grace and all good.

(44) So that we may become even stronger in our faith and not doubt that God can easily create and do everything with a single word, David tells us to look at the winter in contrast to the summer, in which God shows us what He can do and how He always does it. He lets snow, ripen and freeze in winter, which no man can suffer. For of course no man would be able to live a real winter, where he should be without fire and heat, and live only the sun (as he does in summer). In the same way, all creatures would not be able to grow a grain or ripen some fruit in winter. Now, if God can so transform and remove the winter, and bring back the summer, that you have to forget about the winter, and does it so easily that it only costs one word, how much more should you believe that he can help you out of your winter and all your troubles so easily and with one word? He can find wheat where you are in famine. He knows how to make peace where you are in danger of war. He can give happiness to the city where it is spoiled. He can make the bars strong where they are broken or weak; and all this easily, with one word. Cause, he can make summer out of winter with one word, which is greater and more than to help you out of your trouble.

For what can be the misfortune of a single man, city or country, compared to the winter, which is the misfortune of the whole human race and of the whole world? And what is the winter, but an annual flood of sin or annual ruin of the whole world,

that it might even be killed, as the first world was drowned by the flood of sin? But what are the rooms, ovens, hearths, fires, straw, wood, furs, to keep us warm, but Noah's archa, wherein we are preserved in winter, that we freeze not? even as Noah with his own is preserved in the archa, that he drown not; otherwise we must surely perish from winter, as the Psalm also saith here, "Who can abide from his frost?"

(46) Therefore, if God can help the whole world out of winter and out of its annual flood of sin and death, you should learn to trust and believe in this mighty example of divine power, which is set before your eyes every year, in all your troubles. Behold, as the wicked do here, yet believing nothing, they can say in winter, Eh, it shall be summer again, and are sure that there shall be no everlasting winter. So learn thou, and every man also, to say in his winter: Well, let it snow, ripen and freeze, however bad it may be, so it will be summer again and good, God will not let it snow and freeze forever; as the 55th Psalm, v. 23, says: "He will not let the righteous have trouble forever."

And, what is even more comforting, the snow, frost and freeze is his (he says), he creates them himself, and they are not in the hands of the devil or the enemy; he is powerful over them, therefore they do not have to be cold any longer, nor do they have to be cold for us, because he wants them, and we can well endure them; as St. Paul teaches in 1 Cor. 10:13, "that God does not let us be tempted beyond our ability, but brings out the temptation in such a way that we can endure it. If the devil had the frost in his hand, not only would there have to remain winter and eternal frost, and no more summer, but it would have to freeze so hard that all men would freeze to death in one day, and become like ice floes; but God's winter and frost is not eternal; and although it is hard and in itself infallible, it nevertheless gives so much fire, warmth, straw, etc., that we can bear it until summer, when it must cease altogether.

(48) And this David shows finely, when he compares the snow to the wool, the frost to the ashes, the locks to the morsels. How sharply and precisely the man has looked at God's work.

see! Why does he not compare the locks to the pebbles, and the rice to the sand, and the snow to the water? Could he not find closer similes that rhyme better than these? And if the first two rhymed a little, how do locks and morsels rhyme together? Oh, he speaks comfortably, and wants to teach us to recognize winter correctly, so that we should love and praise God, even for the winter itself.

(49) Winter and frost are infallible (he says); but that thou mayest see and understand how it shall be pleasant unto thee, and not destroy thee, God hath painted and formed in the snow, the hoar frost, and the locks, signs which comfort thee, and teach thee otherwise than they doom. For, behold, the snow is fashioned like wool. With this God wants to say this much: The snow shall not kill you; yes, it shows you wool, and you shall have wool and warmth, so that you can endure the winter; before the snow itself would have to become wool, and not only mean. Nor shall the frost kill thee; yea, it showeth thee ashes, which is a hearth, because it is wont to be warm, that thou mayest know that thou shalt not be without warmth in winter, that thou mayest overcome the frost. Nor shall the locks kill thee, but they shall show thee morsels, that thou mayest know that in winter, though nothing groweth, yet thou shalt not die of hunger, but shalt have something to eat.

50 Thus the three pieces: Wool, ashes, morsels, as three prophets, not only indicate that winter should end and summer come again with warmth and food, but also teach and comfort, as three preachers, that even in winter itself, before summer, there should nevertheless be so much warmth and food that we overcome winter. And so the future summer is not only prefigured and formed in snow, hoar frost, locks, by the parables of wool, ashes and bites, but is also mixed in the midst of your present winter, so that it does not have to be all winter, but there should also be something of summer in it. For as much as there is warmth and food in it, so much is of summer in it; just as the sun in winter (though less and weaker than in summer) also shines and warms. Such painting and picture is also

presented in the clouds through the rainbow that we shall be safe from the flood 2c.

51 This is now the fifth benefit, that God also gives us summer in winter, over and above that summer in snow, ripeness and closure will be promised and prepared in the future. But who respects such a blessing? Who thanks him for it? It is true that he needs winter for his glory, so that he can prove his power in it, when he can so easily change such a cold, hard, barren time into a rich, happy, joyful summer; but at the same time he teaches and admonishes us to recognize his benefits and to be grateful. For winter teaches us well what a noble time summer is (where we would like to notice it, or could notice it before stony hearts), and what praise and thanks he deserves with it, but we are used to it, like the sun itself. And such daily use of divine goods makes them too common, contemptible, and low, that we regard them as if we had nothing, or ever nothing special. But if someone were to receive a hundred guilders as a gift from a human being, that would have to be called a great blessing, and would give more joy than God can give with all summer and winter. Fie on you, you shameful unbelief!

V. 18: He speaks and it melts; he lets his wind blow and it thaws.

52 It says that snow, frost and freeze must go away, and summer must come again, as is now said, and that it is not man's work to drive out winter, just as it is not man's work to snow, ripen and freeze, or to be winter. For it does not come as and when we will, but he speaks, that is, as above [v. 15.], "he sends his word," or speaks to the winter, and .tells it to depart, so it happens immediately, and melts both snow, hoar-frost, and ice. And that one must not only believe, but also grasp, that only God's word melts the snow, frost and ice, and drives away the winter, so no one can say that God uses a fire or heat for this, as we must do, if we want to have something hewn up. Nor does he need the sun to do this, but it tends to happen according to the sun.

to bake harder. Yes, just when it freezes hardest, when the snow is deepest, when the ice is thickest, then suddenly it lifts, and the weather breaks, and thaws out with force. Rath, how does this happen? Where does it come from? There was no fire or heat before the thaw, but the most severe cold; nor did the sun, for it thaws without the sun, so that it cannot be seen in the sky.

Reason can answer nothing to this, for thus: The weather breaks, but who breaks it, that it cannot say. But David says that God breaks it. And he indicates with what he breaks it. Not with fire nor heat, but with his word. When he says this to winter, frost and snow, it no longer holds, and his wind comes, and melts away in two or three days what has been frozen for a whole winter. Where would the world take so much wood and fire that one day it would melt frost and ice, I am silent about a whole winter's frost? There are vain great miraculous deeds of God, but have been despised by daily reputation, and nothing is thanked for it.

54 Also David says here: it is "his wind", as he says above [v. 17]: "his frost. For it takes a special wind to make it thaw. Not just any wind does it; God must bring it forth, and by His word it must come to be called, otherwise all the bellows, and all our breathing, would not melt snow, nor drive away winter. But when God's wind comes, which belongs to it, it thaws quickly, regardless of the fact that no heat has preceded it, which would have softened the ice and snow. Yes, at times the thawing wind is almost cold, so that it seems as if God drives out cold with cold, and winter with winter, so that it may be seen that it is not the creature that does it, but his word or his speaking; who also made the furnace of fire cool without cold for the three men of Babylon, and extinguished the fire for them without water, and the fire had to be fire, and yet not burn. It is equal to him to quench fastnesses with fire, and to warm cold with cold.

55 This is what David marvels at here, and praises God, who drives away the winter so wonderfully that he does not use fire and

Heat takes to it, but a cool wind or air. How could it be more strange that the air, which is much thinner and softer than water, nevertheless breaks the hard ice so easily and turns it into water? But water cannot do this. That is why it is called "God's wind" and a special wind, which does not break by nature, but by God's calling and speaking, turns snow and ice into water so soon and so easily.

(56) And it is fine that God takes a wind for thawing and not something else, so that the figure and spiritual meaning may rhyme finely with it. For the spiritual winter must also be driven away by the wind, and not otherwise. The spiritual winter is of two kinds: one when the inner man is frozen in sins and dies in the same cold; there is snow, frost and ice in the hardest way. This winter is made by the law and the devil with his temptations. For since they are not sins in the Holy Spirit, but poor afflicted consciences, the snow is like wool, the frost like ashes, the ice like morsels. For there is hope and promise that such a winter (as we have seen above) will not come.

(§ 43 ff.) and the summer, namely forgiveness of sins, must come, and when it is time, the wind, the Holy Spirit, comes and blows the gospel among such cold sinners, and forgives their sin and comforts them; then it thaws, then it flows, and the winter is gone.

The other winter is when the outward man lies under the cross and is in all kinds of tribulation. This winter is made by the evil, shameful world, which shows us no fire of love, but only frost of hatred, and wants to have us badly dead. But even here the snow is like wool, the frost like ashes, the ice like morsels. For there are some pious hearts that love us, nourish us and encourage us, until the wind of God comes and delivers us from such frost, or converts the hearts of the enemies to become friends, and turns winter into summer, Saul into St. Paul; as there are many such promises and consolations in the Scriptures, that the heathen who persecute the Christians shall honor them greatly, and the kings who raged against them before shall be their nurses and their friends.

Servants are softened and raised by the Spirit of God.

(58) These are first of all the right, high miraculous deeds, which are signified by physical winter and summer; but it is the sorrowful devil that God may nowhere obtain thanks. For where are they who praise God and give thanks for the dear wind of the Gospel, through which we were raised from the cruel frost of the papal tyranny, since everything was frozen to the ground, by the decree of God, who had sent us such strong cold and error for the sake of our wickedness? Well, God is used to it, and his happiness in the world is not different from always doing good, and always being ungrateful, forgetting, despising, even blaspheming, desecrating, and suffering all wickedness for it; as the children of Israel did, and also served other gods, and killed his servants.

V. 19. He shows Jacob his word, Israel his customs and rights.

(59) Hitherto he has given thanks to God for the benefits of temporal goods and worldly status; here he gives thanks for spiritual benefits, which are greater and higher in all measure than temporal goods, though they do not have such a glorious appearance as temporal goods, but are of little reputation, namely, God's word or sermon. This is the precious treasure that brings all happiness, both in this life and in that, and so abundantly that whoever has it is glad of it even in the greatest poverty and misery, and would not give for all the world's good, but would much rather do without all things, even life, and would rather be in death with it than live in misery without it; but there are few who have it rightly.

(60) That is why David put this blessing last, at the end, when a song should sound best. But who can tell how great this blessing is? For who can tell all the virtue and power of the divine word, when all holy scripture and preaching, and all Christian books, do nothing but praise God's word? as we do daily with writing, reading, preaching, singing, writing poetry and painting. For this good deed remains and keeps us even when those good deeds pass away, and when we, through death, die.

leave the same and separate us from each other. But this one does not leave us, nor does it separate from us, but penetrates with us through death, and snatches us out, and brings us into an eternal life, where there will be no dying nor sorrow of death. More about this elsewhere 2c.

61 But he puts three names of the divine word. First he says: "his word"; then: "his customs"; last: "his rights". Let us now distinguish between them: "Word" is to be the divine promise, in which we are to believe; for promise and faith belong together before all other commandments and 1) works. "Customs" shall be the order and manner of worship; as there have been the priesthood, temple, altar, with their vestures, garments, works, sacrifices, and doctrines 2c. The "rights" are to be the commandments in which God ordered the people of Israel how they should live toward others and practice good works of love; as the commandments of the other table teach, along with all the rights that Moses drew from them; as the fifth book especially proves. Such three things must be in all people who are to be God's people; just as we Christians also have the promise of the Gospel, the sacraments, the preaching ministry, and finally the teaching of good works.

V. 20. He does not do this to a Gentile, nor does he let them know his rights.

The Gentiles were enemies of the Jews all over the world, especially their neighbors, mostly because the Jews boasted that they alone were God's people, and thus condemned all Gentiles as God's enemies. For the devil cannot leave it alone; where he sees God's people, he awakens all the world against them, and what wants to be God's people must consider that all the world will become enemy to it. Therefore the Gentiles again boasted and greatly despised the Jews, especially because they saw that the Jews were a small group and had a small kingdom compared to all the Gentiles, who had great kingdoms and empires among them.

63 This is the point of this verse, and David praises this great good deed above all good deeds.

As if he were to say: "Well, let him who boasts, I will let it happen that the Gentiles are equal to us in the former benefits and temporal goods, or even far, far superior; they have stronger bars, more people and goods, greater, greater peace, more and better wheat than we do; God lets them have winter and summer, sun and rain, heaven and earth as abundantly as we do, and even more abundantly. But this I know well, that they cannot boast that they have God's word, that the Lord is their God and they are His people. They will leave this glory to us, and will not imitate it. But we know, and may surely boast, that he is our God, and we are his people. For we have his word, which he has given to us, and not to the Gentiles.

64 Further, because they cannot boast of God nor of His word, they cannot properly boast of God's temporal goods and bodily benefits. For they do not know that they are God's gifts; and therefore they cannot give thanks for them, but boast of the goods and powers in themselves, not as of God's gifts. And so the goods and power are their God, on which they insist, defy, boast. O wretched boasters, defiers, and boasters, who neither have nor know God, nor understand his gifts and benefits, but make gods out of the creature, in which they trust and boast.

(65) What good would it do for any pagan to have a whole world if he did not realize that it was God's gift, and that God did not have his word, but that the world had to be his God, comfort and defiance? Would that I had a city, a house, a chamber, even a stable, only to know that the Lord was my God and the stable his gift. For what can he lack who has God or God's word, if he has nothing else, and is like poor Lazarus, even in death?

66. Again, the heathen, while they boast of their goods and power, boast of their great robbery and theft, as thieves and robbers, and as enemies of God and blasphemers, and their glory is vain shame. For since they hold God's goods and do not realize that [they are] God's goods, and they have the-

1) "und" is Conjectur of the Jena edition; in the original: "vor".

If they have the same from him, nor give thanks for it (as they cannot, because they do not keep his word), it is just as much as stolen and robbed property, and especially because they also deny and blaspheme God, and make other gods out of their property, in which they trust. It is as if a prince lent a possession to someone, and the feudal lord did not want to recognize that he had such a possession from the prince, but denied, blasphemed and persecuted him, and chose another prince as feudal lord: that would be a thief and robber, and an enemy of the prince in his own possession. Therefore the 76th¹ Psalm, v. 5, calls such heathen kingdoms "mountains of robbery", that they rob and steal their goods and power, both before God and the world.

In contrast, a pious David and God's people can boast that he has neither stolen nor robbed anything. For he confesses that it is all God's own; he gives and lends it to him, so that it may be his own, and his glory is pure honor, as a faithful servant of God, whom he knows, thanks and serves. This makes it all that he has God's word, through which he is enlightened and taught to know God and His good deeds. Even though he does not have as much as the Gentiles, there is nothing wrong with it; he has it with honor and grace before God, and sings from the 37th Psalm, v. 16: "The little that a righteous man has is better than the great goods of many wicked men. For they have it with all shame and dishonor before God, as the robbers. Now I would rather have a penny than a pious man, nor many thousand guilders than a rogue. But the wicked does not ask for anything. Money is his god, he sticks to it.

68 O that we could boast like this now and sing this verse! because we so surely have God's word, and the other hand is so exceedingly defiant and glorious, relying on emperors, kings, princes, that is, on their goods and power, and having neither God nor His word, neither thinking nor giving thanks for their goods and power, as for God's gift, but making their goods and power their god, robbing and stealing, as the thieves and huskies of God, all that they have, and possessing

all with dishonor and dishonor, and their boasting is also vice; and, gloat! deny, blaspheme, and persecute God their liege lord, with all his servants and all his kingdom. (Since God will give them little happiness and salvation, amen, than he will do without that).

69) But we can boast that God has given us His word. Let them now be rich, and us beggars; let them be mighty, but us weak; let them be happy, but us sad; let them be glorious, but us despised; let them be alive, but us dead; let them be everything, but us nothing: what then? They still have no God, but must make a beggarly, lantern-like God themselves out of their pennies. O the wretched matter to the God! O merciful God forge! But we have God, and boast of the right God. They must leave us this ruby, against which all their kingdoms are rotten dung and muck.

70 Whether we have to suffer zero much, what harm is it? It is said, if you want to be a Christian, *sufficit tibi gratia mea*, thank you that you have my word, and through the word myself. What harm is there in need, hunger, pestilence? What harm to you from the throbbing of the harassers? from the courage of the peasants? from the rage of the papists? from the disgrace of the whole world? from the wrath of all the devils? You have God's word, and they have not. You are with me in grace, and they are not. You are my child, they are my enemies. Rather, let my word be to you than myself, even a treasure, even a kingdom, even a kingdom of heaven in your poverty, misery and sorrow. My word remains forever, and you also in the word; your misery, and that arrogance, passes away, before one means [it].

Note lastly that David is not boasting here of the great miracles God performed for the people of Israel, which glory is right and glorious, but of the word of God. For of all miracles, signs and deeds, the word is truly the highest, the best, the most certain. Therefore, observe and note that God's people are the most certain 4) to be recognized, and the highest comfort is to have God's word, as he says here. For with it he sets himself against

2) Erlanger: and us.

3> Erlanger: "denn" instead of: dein.

4) Walch and the Erlanger: allergewissen.

1) In the original and in the editions: 86th Psalm.

all the world, saying, "Come, whoever has what he has, God will not do to any people on earth as He has done to me. Yet they do not have the word of God, nor do they want it, nor are they worthy of it, for they do not have it.

persecute it and consider it an abomination. But it is my highest treasure and comfort. Therefore, Jerusalem, praise such a Lord, praise such a God, Zion; praise and extol everything that has breath! Amen.

34. short interpretation on the 19th Psalm,*)

It was written in Latin by Philipp Melanchthon and later Germanized by Georg Spalatin.

Written probably in 1524; printed in 1531.

This psalm is a prophetic and doctrinal psalm, for it prophesies that the gospel shall be preached in all the world. Then he adds to it the manifold great praises of the gospel, how it is done, and what it accomplishes. Third, the prophet David adds a prayer in which he confesses his sin and asks God to protect him so that the godless false teachers and preachers will not deceive him with the appearance of wisdom, righteousness or happiness. Therefore, this psalm is of the generis demonstrativi type, describing how the kingdom of Christ will take shape, and teaches many good things that serve greatly to build up faith and comfort consciences against the troubles that make the hearts of believers in Christ very dull and weary. For it can be seen that the kingdom of Christ is weak, and that Christianity will fall to the ground and fail. But this psalm teaches that Christ and his gospel must not be hindered.

as little as one can prevent the sun from running.

(2) Furthermore, this psalm also teaches that God's word will be active and create and do great things. Likewise, this psalm teaches that a new word will be preached, that is, that it will go throughout the whole world and save those who believe in it, because the law of Moses was given only to the Jews. Finally, this psalm also teaches that the kingdom of Christ is to be a spiritual kingdom; therefore, that it is to be spread by God's word, and not by bodily weapons and weapons, and the Jews' mention of the bodily kingdom, and that they considered it that Christ's kingdom should stand in bodily things. Moreover, there is also a very useful doctrine of repentance at the end of this psalm. For it indicates that we always have sins, but that we are not redeemed from them by our works, but by God's grace and mercy.

*This writing is found only in the edition of Walch, who reports about it in the introduction to the 4th volume, p. 41b: "The short interpretation of the 19th Psalm was excellently translated by Philippus Melanchthon and Georg Spalatinus into the German language, in which it was published at Zwickau in 1531, and has now been reprinted here after this edition. We are not told anything about the time and occasion of the writing, but the writing itself gives us some cause for conjecture, which is not without probability. The glossary-like character of the interpretation proves that we are dealing here neither with a postscript of a sermon nor with a lecture, but rather with an explanation given privately to Melanchthon. The biblical text used in the translation is essentially that of Luther's translation of the Psalms from 1524 (Walch, St. Louis Edition, Bd. IV, 17 f.s. The three personalities mentioned in this writing (Z 19; together, the papal legate 'Eampegius, the archbishop of Salzburg and Eck, we meet in 1524 from the Imperial Diet at Nuremberg Md soon thereafter in the same year at the Convention at Regensburg (Köstlin, Martin Luther f3. Aufl.), Bd. I, p. 633 f.; Kolde, M. Luther, Bd. II, p. 102i. In addition, the interpretation of the same Psalm given to Veit Dietrich at Coburg in 1530 (St. Louiser Ausg., Bd. I V, 1508s) shows a great progress in comparison to this writing; therefore, it is to be assigned to a significantly earlier time. We therefore assume the year 1524 as the probable time of writing.

V. 1. The heavens tell the glory of God and the strongholds proclaim the work of His hands.

3 This is so much talk: The glory of GOD is preached everywhere in all lands, under the whole heaven. The power is in the word "tell", so that he reminds us of the oral and external word, to think much of it. "The glory of GOD" is the gospel, for by the gospel GOD is known. "The works of the hands of GOD" are all the works that the Gospel works; as namely justification, beatification, redemption from sins, death and the devil's kingdom.

V. 2: One day tells another, one night announces another.

(4) This is so much as to say that the gospel should also be preached always, and that the Christian church should endure forever.

V. 3. There is no speech nor language, since their voice is not heard.

5 This is the opinion: The gospel should also be preached in all countries, nations and tongues, and not only among the Jews, not only in Jerusalem, but in all tongues. It is to be noted that he publicly calls God's word. Likewise the art of 1) God; for through the Gospel God is known, as St. John says in Chapter 1, v. 18: "No one has ever seen God, but the only one who sits in the bosom of the Father, he has proclaimed it to us. For the law shows us God's wrath and not God's grace, but now God's grace is shown to us through the gospel, because of which God is now rightly known. Furthermore, the prophet David also says: "their voice", which clearly indicates that this Psalm speaks of the ministry of preaching.

V. 4. Their guide has gone out into all the earth, and their speech to the end of the world 2c.

(6) This is David's way, that he commonly speaks first with hidden and veiled words, and then with bad words. Thus he teaches 2) also here publicly that

1) The word "art" seems to stand here in the meaning of "knowledge".

2) In the original "lernet"; likewise afterwards in § 12: "lernen" instead of: lehren.

it will come to pass that God's grace will be preached everywhere. "The direction" here means as much as a direction, government or saying. After that he freely calls it the speech or the word, so that we should know that he is talking about the preaching ministry.

And he has made a tabernacle for the sun in it.

(7) Then David returns to the obscure description, and, as one is wont to do in funny poems, sweetly mixes the obscure and undisguised words together. And by the "sun" he wants to indicate and signify Christ, for he had previously thought of the heavens, therefore he now also calls the prince of the heavens, the sun, and thus indicates that his kingdom is to increase under the whole heaven. For he says that a tabernacle has been made for the sun in the heavens, that is, that Christ will rule and reign in all the lands that will believe in Christ. And the holy Christian church will be as far as the whole world.

V. 5. 6. And she goes out like a bridegroom from his chamber, and is glad, like a hero, to run the way. She arises at one end of heaven, and runs back to that same end, and nothing is hidden from her heat.

8. these two verses have this opinion: the Lord Christ is lovely and kind, brings great comfort to the consciences, and will reign and prevail in all places, so that no one will be able to resist him.

V. 7: The law of the Lord is without change, and restores the soul. The testimony of the Lord is certain 2c.

(9) Here David leaves off the flowery speeches, and speaks with bad, undisguised words, and shows what great things God's word creates and works. Now he says, "the law of the Lord." If the law of the Lord does this, human statutes and findings do not. He also indicates that the word to be preached in the new kingdom is the word of God and not the word of man.

(10) "Is without change," that is, it is wholesome, and has no gleißneric addition or false opinion of the false services. And this praise of God's word is to be understood in this way, that God's word makes healthy people, that is, those who do not have a Pharisaic opinion of false worship. For the word "law" is taken for GOD's word according to the common way of the holy scriptures. "And refresh the soul", that is, God's Word refreshes, revives and comforts the dull, afflicted and troubled consciences, which were previously scattered by diversity of works and services.

The testimony of the Lord is certain and makes the foolish wise.

(11) This is "God's testimony", that is, God's word is true, and does not make hypocrites, but righteous, truthful, and such people who have a right faith and opinion of God. "Testimony" in the Scriptures often means as much as God's word. "And make wise the foolish." "The foolish" is what David calls those who do not sit down against God's word, but allow themselves to be instructed by it.

V. 8. The essays of the Lord are right and gladden the heart. The commandments of the Lord are pure, and enlighten the eyes.

12. "The essays of the Lord are right"; that is, they make right and bad, undeceived people, who in simplicity seek not their own glory, but God's. "And gladden the heart," for the gospel comforts the stupid, desponding, and afflicted conscience. "The commandments of the LORD are pure"; that is, pure and without Pharisaic leaven and addition. "And enlighten the eyes"; that is, they teach to know GOD.

V. 9. The fear of the Lord is pure and abides forever. The rights of the Lord are righteous, all of them right.

13. "The fear of the Lord is pure," that is, the gospel makes one fear God rightly and not carnally, that is, so that faith stands beside the fear of God. "And abide forever," for it is a righteous fear, therefore it persists in the contest.

14. "The judgments of the Lord are righteous," that is, the gospel kills and punishes sin, and makes righteous slaying, and not fictitious, as the human statutes have false slaying of the flesh, with certain fasts and the like.

V. 10. They are more precious than gold, and much finer gold. They are sweeter than honey and honeysuckle.

(15) That is, the gospel is lovely, comforting, and delightful. For it rejoices the conscience.

V. 11. Anch is thy servant become careful through them. For he has great reward who keeps them.

16 This is to be interpreted with this ruling: He who keeps God's law will be rewarded for it. And this is a fine promise, which serves against the trouble, the happy welfare of the godless evil people.

V. 12: Who notices the errors? Cleanse me from the secret ones.

Now follows the third part of this psalm, namely a prayer. And first there is a confession or confession. As if to say: Behold, we have such a precious, noble word, but we are weak and unbelieving. But you, dear God, also want to forgive and remit the sin that we do not yet realize and recognize. With this also the dear David of the Pharisees wants to have forgiven sin. As if he wanted to say: The saints also have sin, but these are forgiven and remitted. But the persecutors of the gospel have such sins, which are terrible and will not be forgiven. Therefore it follows soon after:

V. 13 Also keep thy servant from the proud, that they rule not over me: then shall I be without change, and innocent from great iniquity.

18. That is, my dear God, I pray that you will ever protect me, so that I will not be moved by the great fortune, honor and power, splendor and wealth, false, seeming wisdom and justice of the persecutors of God's word, to fall from your holy word.

Nineteen: "That they rule not over us." As if David wanted to say, "I am in danger, and in constant battle and strife, and the manifold troubles move me and make me mad. Therefore, my dear God, be thou so that the troubles do not overcome me, and that the proud do not win, triumph and have the upper hand, that neither Pope, nor Campegius, neither the one from Salzburg, nor Eck, do not overpower me with the splendid titles of the Christian church, of the holy fathers, of schism and the like. "Here you can see the reason why David put the confession above: As if to say, I acknowledge and confess that I have sin; yet, if I will abide in God's word, and not applaud the proud persecutors of God's word, I will remain sound, right, and pure in God's fear. "And will remain innocent from great iniquity." That is, from blasphemy and the ungodly.

V. 14. Let the speech of my mouth and the conversation of my heart be acceptable to you.

020 That is, if I will not applaud the wicked, and they will not overbear me, I will keep the word of God, and then God will be pleased with my preaching, worship, and other my conduct.

V. 15. O Lord, my refuge and my redeemer.

21 This is King David's prayer at the end of this psalm, so that he may pray that God may graciously protect, guard and preserve him and all of us in His holy word. Which God, the Father of all graces and mercy, in this perilous time, for eternal comfort and salvation, grant to us all. To Him, together with His only Son, our dear Lord and Savior Christ JESU, and the Holy Spirit, be thanksgiving, praise and glory forever and ever. Amen.

35a. A sermon on Psalm 68:19,

from the power of the Ascension of Christ.*)

Held on the day after the Ascension, May 31, 1527. Printed 1527.

At this time, the feast of the Ascension of the Lord Christ is celebrated, which is a high article of our faith, and so high to human reason that the more it is contemplated and remembered, the more it seems that it is not true. For reason cannot comprehend that a man, having flesh and blood, should have ascended into heaven and become lord over all creatures, having equal authority with God, when it can scarcely have heard such a thing from

God Himself believes, will keep silent about a human being. Therefore, God has commanded us to close our eyes, ears, and all our senses, and to wrap ourselves up in His word, not to fall into it with our reason, or else we will certainly be like the man who wants to look straight into the sun with stupid eyes: the more and longer he looks into it, the more damage it does to his face. So it is here, too: the more one looks at the and other articles uu-

*This sermon was first published in Wittenberg by Nickel Schirlentz in 1527 under the title: "Ein gute predigt, Von der Himelfart Christi. Interpretation of the saying from the lxvij Psalm, Du bist ynn die Höhe gefahren vn hast das gefengnis gefangen, du hast gab empfangen für die Menschen. Mar. Luth. Wittenberg." In the same year, a reprint was published by Friedrich Peypus at Nuremberg, which differs on the title only by different orthography. Only in the second edition of the Erlangen edition, Vol. 17, p. 287, is this, the original relation of the sermon, printed; the following number in this volume (No. 35 ds, which is found in the collective editions, is a revision of the same, probably somewhat smoother in expression, but weakened and prolix. To what extent this is the case, the reader can judge for himself, since we, as well as the Erlangen, bring both relations. The Erlanger offers as time determination: "Held on Ascension Day, May 30, 1527", but we see from the index in Buchwald's "Poach", Vol. I, p. XXVII, that this sermon was held on the day after Ascension Day, May 31, 1527. After that our correction.

The more he tries to fathom and measure the truth of our faith with reason and human wisdom, the more he becomes blinded and foolish. As the spirits of the mob do in our lines, they are not to be advised or helped.

So it is with this article of the Ascension of Christ also. Who wants to stay inside, let him grasp the sayings of this article. But the Holy Spirit wrote this article long before in the 68th Psalm, v. 19: "Thou hast ascended on high, and hast taken the prison, and hast given gifts among men. The dear prophets spoke of this and other articles of the Christian faith so confidently and undoubtedly that they believed them to be true, even though it would not come to pass until long afterward, as they believed. Again, we who see that such things have happened, and read and hear the scriptures of the evangelists and apostles who have seen them, place ourselves thereunto, as though we thought them lies, or else hear them as other stories and tales, and when they come in at one ear, they go out at the other. The dear apostles, however, looked at the sayings of such stories with sharp eyes and drew them out; as Paul to the Ephesians on the 4th [v. 8] looked at this saying from the 68th Psalm: "You have ascended on high" 2c., in which the ascension of Christ is finely described, as we will hear.

Many a learned man has read this saying, but no one has understood it except the Christians. They also preached yearly how Christ had gone to heaven, but they did not know what he had done for us, namely, that he had caught the prison 2c. It is a mighty saying, therefore let us see what he has in it.

First of all, the saying is: "You have ascended on high" 2c. The prophet often calls the Lord Christ, who ascended on high, "God" in the same psalm. But how does it rhyme with God that he should ascend on high, because he is so high that nothing can be higher than he, and everything is subject to him, and is called in the Scriptures the Most High; how then did he ascend on high?

With the short word: "You have gone up on high" the prophet indicates that the person is

Christ is true God and man. For if he ascended, then he must have been down below, as St. Paul finely indicates to the Ephesians in the 4th chapter, where he says: "That he ascended, what is it but that he first descended into the lowest parts of the earth? He that descended is he that ascended above all heavens, that he might fill all things." He descended first, that is, he became the lowest and most despised, so that he could not have descended lower; nor did any man descend lower than he, so that the word of St. Paul, "He descended," would stand firm and remain true. For he has given himself down to the lowest depths, under the law, under the devil, death, sin and hell. That is, I think, the last and lowest depth. Therefore, this saying demands that the person who descended and ascended is not only true God, but also true man.

But what is the cause that he has gone down so low? Isaiah the prophet shows it in the 53rd chapter, v. 5: "For sin's sake," he says, "I have smitten him of my people." Read the whole chapter. And John at the first, v. 29: "Behold, this is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." There you hear that the world is in sins and condemnation; the same sin Christ takes upon Himself, it lies on His neck, and what the world has done oppresses Him. So also, because the whole world was guilty of death because of sin (for death, says St. Paul Rom. 5, 12, came into the world through sin), He threw Himself under the feet of death, died and was buried, and also went down into hell under the devil (no man has ever gone down so deep). But because it was impossible that he should be held by death, he had to go up again from this depth, that is, to the right hand of God, where no higher thing can be. He could not descend any lower, nor could he ascend any higher; for nothing is lower than hell, nothing higher than the right hand of God. Both he has tried; both we will also have to camouflage and try, where we want to follow him differently. He has gone through it all, so that

He occupies everything and, as Paul says [Eph. 4:10], fills everything. He wants and must be in all places. Therefore it follows that the GOD described in the 68th Psalm must also be man, and is described in this short verse: "You ascended on high and captured the prison" 2c., that God became man, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, died, rose again from death, ascended to heaven. For if he is to ascend, he must descend, that is, as has been said, he must become man, take upon himself the sin of the world, suffer death 2c. Again, if he should ascend again, take prison captive, distribute gifts among men, and rule over sin, death, devil, hell and all creatures as God, then he must be more than a man, yes, must be true God, because such are not works of a creature, but of the Creator himself 2c. Thus St. Paul looked with sharp eyes at this saying in the epistle to the Ephesians, as it is said that it contains the birth, death and resurrection of 2c. Christ.

Now that he has gone up, what is he doing? What is his office? Is he sitting up there on a golden chair, with angels courting him, or is he idle? No. Hear what St. Paul says from the prophet: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast caught the prison, thou hast given gifts among men." There you hear what his office is. He judges two things: He has caught the prison, he does not stop yet, he keeps it caught without ceasing. That is one piece. The other: He has given gifts among men, gives them 1) also to the end of the world among his Christians.

And it is sweetly spoken, "Thou hast caught the prison." Scripture also has other such ways of speaking as: Law makes free from the law, law tears up the law, sin takes away sin, death overcomes death, poison drives out poison, a strong man beats another strong man. So here also: "You have caught the prison"; do not say: You have taken away the prison; otherwise it might be said about some people.

years return; but: has caught it, that [it] hinhort no one may take captive.

What then is the prison that Christ has caught? Some have drawn this prison to mean that Christ, having ascended to heaven, delivered the holy ancients from the outer castle of hell. But that this is not the opinion is indicated by the words themselves, which hold up to us another song that captures me and you and all men, namely a spiritual one, by which the soul is captured, and is thus held captive like a thief or murderer to death. So then, as I said, this prison that imprisons us is the law, sin, death, the devil and hell. There the law stands, urging and commanding us to be pious, to love God with all our heart and our neighbor. We do not do this, and it is impossible for us to do it. But because we do not, it takes us captive and passes judgment on us that we are guilty of eternal death and damnation, saying [Gal. 3:10]: "Cursed be every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them! Oh Lord God! A horrible, terrible judgment this is! So I hear that if a man kept the whole law, and lacked only one thing, he would still be accursed? Yes, indeed, accursed! This is also what St. Jacob means when he says [Cap. 2, 10]: "If anyone keeps the whole law, and sins in one thing, he is guilty of it. Yes, you cannot keep the least bit of the law, you may be outwardly so pious, how would you keep it completely? Nor was it given by God to be kept by human power in order to make people blessed, for if it were able to do so, we would not be able to do anything for Christ; rather, it was given so that people would recognize their sin, inability and condemnation in it, and thus learn to despair of themselves through the law and seek help and counsel elsewhere.

Therefore do as you will, the law takes you captive. If you do not feel it now, the hour will come when the world will be too tight for you. How can I get out of this prison? Despair of you and of

1) In the original: gibts.

If you do not, you will be stuck in this prison forever; no creature, no saint, nor angel will be able to help you out; but if you cling to him, you will be helped, because Christ has caught the law, which cannot escape us if we believe in him.

How did it happen that Christ caught the law? St. Paul teaches it to the Galatians [Cap. 4, 4]. "The Son of God," he says, "was born of a woman, and was put under the law, that he might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption." Item [Cap. 3, 11. ff.]: "By the law no one is justified before God," yes, it only makes the transgression greater. [But Christ redeemed us from the malediction of the law, being a malediction unto us (for it is written, Every man that hangeth on the wood is maledicted), that the blasphemy of Abraham might come among the Gentiles in Christ Jesus.

Then you hear that Christ crawled into the prison in which we all are, put himself under the law, was a man of all graces, righteousness 2c. full, worthy of life, yes, was life itself; the law comes here, addresses itself to him, wants to deal with him as with all other men; Christ looks on, lets the tyrant rule over him, lets himself be scolded by him without any guilt as a malediction, yes, bears the title that he is the malediction himself, and goes over it in ruins, dies and is buried. Now won! means the law. But it did not know that it had so shamefully transgressed, and condemned and strangled God's Son. Because it has now condemned and condemned the one who was innocent, and to whom it had no right, it must again stand, be captured, crucified, lose all its power, and lie under the feet of the one it condemned.

Now if you want to have a free, good, safe conscience, and be delivered from the prison of the law, hold on to Christ; he has become a master of the law and has caught it. If you believe in him, you have safe, free conduct, because Christ has caught it for you,

that you not only be free from the law, but also rule over it through and in it. This is what St. Paul means when he says: "Christ redeemed us from the malediction of the law, being a malediction to us" 2c.

As the law takes us captive, so sin also takes us captive, making us a despondent, stupid conscience, so that we are afraid of a rustling leaf. How then shall we do to it, that we may be loosed from it? Look at Christ; he has caught the prison, has taken away one sin by another 1). How so? He became a sinner, yes, sin itself, and thus took away the sin of the world through his sin. Of this St. Paul to the Romans, cap. 8 [v. 3.] says: "God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned sin in the flesh by sin, that righteousness, required by the law, might be fulfilled in us." And 2 Cor. 5:21: "GOD made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become in him the righteousness that is before GOD."

There you hear that Christ by his sin takes away sin from the world and condemns it. But a strange, whimsical speech is this: sin takes away sin, sin condemns sin. Would it not be said of his: righteousness takes away sin, and Christ by his righteousness took away sin from the world and condemned it? No. Why? Because the sin and punishment of the whole world is on Christ's neck; John 1:29: "Behold, this is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" There he is under sin, counted out of the law of Moses for a man who has sinned, and considered the worst of sinners, hanging between two murderers as an arch-robber. There the saying from the 69th Psalm, v. 10, has been fulfilled: "The reproach of them that reproach thee is fallen upon me." And in the 32nd Psalm, v. 5, it says: "I make known my sin and do not hide my iniquity." These same words are spoken by Christ, and he speaks them like a sinner.

If Christ has committed no sin, neither is there any deceit in his mouth: as

1) Erlanger: andern.

is he then a sinner? Because of his person he is not a sinner, but pure, holy, righteous, yes, the righteousness itself 2c. But he is the Lamb of God who took upon himself my sin and your sin and the sin of all the world, and, to atone for it, shed his own blood. So Christ with his sin, which he took upon himself, has torn asunder and cast out all sin in the world. If you believe in him, his sin is so powerful that it tears away and condemns your sin.

Therefore, if your sin weighs you down and weighs you down, see to it that you do no work to subdue and quench it, or you work in vain, but hold fast to Christ, from whom sin is imprisoned and has received its judgment, like a murderer who receives his judgment for his wrongdoing; he sees certain death before his eyes, for the judgment has already passed over him; what life can he have? His life is nothing but a walk to death. So sin is still stirring in us, but it has already passed its judgment, is now completely weak and powerless, and can never condemn us, because it has been defeated and captured by Christ, and the more it looks at the Christians, the less it judges them, and only gives the Christians greater cause through their temptation to cry out to their Lord Christ for help. So Christ is there, and says: "Dear sin, you may well press my Christians, but you shall not gain anything from them; you shall be condemned, and not make them guilty before me. Therefore, what sin does in the conscience of Christians has no power, for the sin of Christ has overcome sin. That means that sin is expelled with sin. You see, dear man, that Christ does not sit idle up in heaven, but strikes at our enemies without ceasing, and takes them captive so that they cannot harm us.

Death is also one of our enemies, before whom all the world is terrified and frightened, nor is there an emperor so strong and powerful who could resist him; they all have to stand their ground, they may be great or small, young or old, rich or poor, noble or ignoble, and they all have to be protected from death.

He will be strangled and devoured; there is no remedy, help or advice. How do you do that you can escape from him? If you want to escape from him, leave your works alone, for you will not and cannot do anything with them (the sneeze is too strong; it cannot be beaten with caps or with shaven heads), and see what works Christ has done; he is the devourer of death and has overcome our death with his death.

How did this happen? Death came upon Christ, once wanted to eat a sweet morsel, opened his jaws wide, ate him up like all other men. Christ let death eat him, remains stuck in his throat until the third day. But the cute little bite did not want to get death, could not digest it, because it was too strong for him, must spit it out again, and thus strangle himself on it.

Therefore Christ has overcome all death by his innocent death. If we believe in him, we must die, be scarred and rot; but we have the advantage that our temporal death is a passage to eternal life. Thus the death we must suffer is no longer a real death, but only a painted death, and this is made by the death of Christ, who has caught our death. This means to overcome death with death, and to expel poison with poison. Of this miraculous overcoming of one death against another, Hosea the prophet says on the 13th [v. 14.] in the person of Christ: "Death, I will be your death"; as [if] he wanted to say: Thou slayest the whole world, thou shalt again be slain unto me, that all they which believe on me may tread thee under foot, and lords through me may rejoice over thee.

There you can see how blessed and superior the death of our Lord Christ is, how he bites down shamefully and does not allow our death to harm us, yes, it must benefit us and be an entrance to blessedness and eternal life. So Christ has gone to heaven, sits at the right hand of God, and his office is to set souls free from the law, sin and death.

2) "More excellent" is given in the other relation by: "more wholesome and powerful".

1) Erlanger: the same.

Therefore we must not be afraid of him, as of a severe judge, but we must do all that is good to him, as of our most gracious Savior and Advocate, who not only has overcome sin, death and all misfortunes for our good, but who helps us without ceasing, so that such things may not harm us, and where we lack, he represents us to the Father. O, he is a friendly king, if only we could believe it! If we believed it, we would be in good spirits and cheerful, and our hearts would laugh that we had such a man for God, who would take care of our needs and help us out of all misfortune. We would not become monks, priests and nuns, run to Rome, offer masses, call on St. Barbara and other saints as mediators and think that we would get to heaven through them, but would hold on to this Christ, who became man for our sake, died and rose again, so that we, saved from sins and death, would live forever through him.

If our sin, as has been said, is taken away by Christ, then the law cannot condemn us, nor does death have any more right and power over us, for the law cannot convince us that we are sinners, because Christ has crucified and taken away the same. So it follows that the devil can also create nothing against us. For through Christ we are delivered from the power and kingdom of the devil, which is a kingdom of darkness, error, sin and death, and transferred into his kingdom, which is a kingdom of light, right understanding, righteousness and life. So we must not be afraid of hell either, for hell and all other enemies of ours Christ has captured. This is what St. Paul means when he says to Corinthians [1 Ep. 15, 54. f. 58.]: "Death is swallowed up in victory! Death, where is your sting? Hell, where is your victory? Thanks be to God, who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Let this be said of the first part, that Christ ascended on high and caught the prison, that is, he overcame sin, death, the devil, hell, and opened the way to heaven for us who believe this to be our good. These are

all unbelievable 1) words before our eyes. But the prophets and apostles speak of it in this way, that they believed it to be certain and true, and felt it in their hearts. But we, because we do not see how sin and death are imprisoned, do not believe it, nor do our hearts feel it. For when we see that death wants to come, it is evident how we believe this; indeed, if we could crawl into a mouse hole and thus escape death, we would do so. Nevertheless, if you want to remain otherwise unentangled by death, you must believe that Christ is above and has caught death, so that it must leave you uncaught. This will remain, so that sin will attack you, death will frighten you, God's judgment will touch your conscience. But how shall you do to him? You certainly do not have to act as you feel. You do not have to say: O woe, death wants to devour me! O woe, hell hath opened wide its harbor, and will devour me! but take courage, and tread such thoughts under foot, and say, It is not, O woe, death will devour me; it is, Thou hast ascended on high, and hast caught the prison." The "going up" will forbid you, O death, to leave me devoured. I shall be free, and am free, because of him that ascended on high.

So a Christian overcomes death 2c. What weapons does he use? Letters of indulgence, caps, rosaries 2c.? No. What then? He grasps the word that Christ has gone to heaven and has the prison 2c., or another, by faith, and clings to it firmly, and thus passes through death into life. But it truly requires faith that can believe such things. He who believes cannot despair; indeed, he must rejoice that Christ has caught the prison. Therefore, he knows well that he is and remains uncaught, and thinks to himself: "Oh, merciful God, how sweet and sweet a father you are, that you deal so fatherly and warmly with us poor, condemned sinners, that you throw your only Son, Jesus Christ, your most precious possession, into the hands of death, the devil 2c. and the devil into the hands of the Lord.

1) Thus in the second redaction. Erlanger: "unbelieving".

The Lord has given us a joy that is not felt by the heart, but is a sign that it is without faith. Where the heart does not feel such joy, but is tight and afraid, it is a sign that it is without faith. Therefore, as I said in the beginning, this thing is so high that one cannot preach enough about it, indeed, no human heart can ever comprehend it sufficiently here on earth; it must be saved for that life, otherwise a man would die of joy.

Now let us also speak a little of the other piece, "Thou hast given or received gifts among men."

I have said that Christ has two offices, which he handles without interruption. The first is that he has caught all the calamities that afflict us and make us despair, so that they may afflict us, but they cannot harm us; the second is that he rains down 1) and sends gifts among men, that is, the Holy Spirit with his gifts, as St. Paul interprets it to the Ephesians [Cap. 4:11, 12]. "Christ," he says, "appointed some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, that the saints might all be knit together in common ministry, for the betterment of the body of Christ." 2c. That is, he did it so that in the congregation of his Christians there would be various gifts for the preaching of the gospel, for the conversion of unbelievers, for the enlightenment of men, for the interpretation of the Scriptures by one, for the testing of the spirits by another, for the knowledge of various languages by a third, and for the interpretation of others, and so on.

Once, on the day of Pentecost, Christ visibly gave the Holy Spirit with His gifts to the apostles, so that they spoke with many tongues, cast out devils, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, etc., which happened because the apostles' preaching was new and unheard of; if it was to be accepted, Christ had to confirm it with such miracles and gifts. But now until the end of the world he gives the Holy Spirit.

and the gifts secretly and invisibly to his Christians.

But, as I said, just as it is unbelievable to reason that Christ overcame all calamities and caught them, so it does not believe that Christ distributes gifts among men. For when the apostles received the Holy Spirit, spoke with new tongues, passed through Judea and Samaria, and preached the gospel, and afterward 2) passed through the Roman empire, and confirmed their preaching with signs and wonders: who perceived it? who believed that they were right? Yes, they had to hear from their own Jews that they were raving and drunk, item, that they were possessed by the devil, yes, full of devils, and were executed as seducers and rebellious evildoers, both by Jews and Gentiles.

Therefore one does not see and recognize the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but rather condemns them 3). For everything that our Lord God speaks or does is not and must not be right for the world. It takes His word for the devil's word, and the devil's teaching for divine teaching; God's work must be devilish to it, and again the devil's work must be divine to it. But the Christians alone think of God's word and works what they should think, but still not perfectly.

As it happened to the apostles, so it happens to us now: princes and lords consider us heretics, seducers, rebellious, devilish people. Thus they praise our gifts, which our Lord Christ distributes among us! The same thing is done by the spirits of the pagans, who do not see any gifts in us either. What they speak and do is spiritual, yes, the spirit itself; but what we poor sinners do is fleshly and devilish, yes, the devil himself. Still, the verse stands firm: "Thou hast given gifts among men." He also always finds those to whom he gives his spirit, who recognize, and no one else, what gifts they receive from him. In the papacy, which is the cause of all heresy of this last time, he has nevertheless had his own, on whom he has poured out his gifts; they have well seen that the pope is the right one.

2) "they" seems too much.

3) In the original: "evaporates", that is, damn them.

The people who said that the Antichrist and his doctrine were devilish doctrine, also spoke out against the Pabst and his doctrine. But what they did, they had to do secretly, were not allowed to make a fuss, or it would have cost them their necks. Nor was it yet time for the right light to shine and expose the Pabst's deception; but now that it has appeared by God's grace, one can see before one's eyes what Pabstianism is.

You have now heard from this verse that Christ has ascended on high and has assumed the dominion and authority of God to rule over all things, and that he does not sit idly above, but has to do with us here below without ceasing, namely, that he first saves us from sins and makes us more godly day by day; Secondly, that he is a kind, merciful Lord, who demands nothing of us, but richly showers us with abundant, unspeakable holy goods and gifts, so that we may become brave and defiant, and fear no one, whether it be tyrants, the spirits of the wicked, sin, death, the devil, or hell. You have also heard how the world does not recognize or believe in the ministry of Christ, and even condemns it and makes a mockery of it, and how it alone is the only thing that can be done.

Christians recognize and believe, and yet not enough, for they are sometimes, yes, often deceived, that they are annoyed at other Christians when they see their infirmity and do not live fully of all things, and that the dear prophets could have spoken much better of these things before they happened, than we who hear, read and also believe that they happened.

Thus, in these short words, the ascension of Christ is finely depicted, that he has gone up for our good (as in all other things), and therefore sits above, that he may help us and comfort us with his gifts. Whoever knows and believes this, the ascension of Christ is comforting and useful to him, who goes to God with an undaunted heart and says: Dear Father, here comes a poor sinner, give piety; a wretched man who is afraid of death, give bold courage 2c. An unbeliever cannot have such confidence in God; indeed, he is frightened when he hears the name of God mentioned, not to mention that he should do good to God through Christ, as to a father. Let us leave it at that, God grant us His grace, amen.

35b. A comforting sermon about the fruit and power of the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ,

on the saying of the 68th Psalm, v. 19: Thou art ascended on high 2c., attracted and explained by St. Paulum Eph. 4, 8. Preached by D. Atari. Luth. Anno 1527.*)

The day after the Ascension, May 31, 1527.

Eph. 4, 8. ff.

He ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. But that he ascended, what is it but that he went down first into the lowest parts of the earth? He that descended is he that ascended above all heavens, that he might fill all things.

1. on this day the feast of the Ascension of the Lord Christ is celebrated, on which it is customary to preach the article of our holy Christian faith: "Ascended to heaven", which is a high article, and is so incomprehensible to human reason that the more it contemplates and thinks about it, the more it seems that it is not true. For human reason cannot comprehend that a

*This revision of the sermon reported in the previous number (compare our **Me note** on the same) is found in the collective editions: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. IV, Al. 5256; in the Eisleben, vol. I, p. 407; in the Altenburg, vol. III, p. 749; in the Leipzig, vol. XII, p. 491; in the Erlanger (I. Anfl.), vol. 18, p. 169 and in the second edition, vol. 17, p. 302. We give the text according to the Wittenberg.

Man, who has flesh and blood, has ascended to heaven, has become a lord over all creatures, and has equal authority with God; if they hardly believe such things of God Himself, let alone of a human being. Therefore, in matters of faith that concern the divine essence and will and our salvation, we should close our eyes, ears and all our senses, listen only and pay diligent attention to what and how the Scriptures speak of it, and wrap ourselves badly in God's word, and judge ourselves according to it, and not fall into it and want to judge with our reason. Otherwise we will certainly be like someone who looks straight into the bright sun with stupid eyes; the more and longer he looks, the greater the damage to his face. In the same way, the more one wants to investigate, establish and judge this and other articles of our faith with reason and human wisdom, the more erroneous and deluded he becomes about it. As can be seen in our time with all the red spirits, both Sacramentans and Anabaptists; therefore they can neither be advised nor helped.

Whoever wants to know the use and power of this article: "Ascended into heaven" 2c., let him look carefully at the sayings of the Holy Scriptures in which this article is set forth, as the Holy Spirit has long before in the 68th Psalm, v. 19, set forth and established with clear and distinct words: "Thou hast ascended on high, and hast caught the prison, and hast received gifts for men."

(3) The fathers and prophets spoke of these and other articles of our Christian faith with such certainty and without doubt that they believed them without question, even though they were not fulfilled and put into practice until long afterward. Again, we who know and daily confess in our faith that all things have come to pass and are finished, and who daily hear the prophets, apostles, and evangelists interpret their writings, put ourselves to it as if we thought it were a lie, or hear it no differently than if it were a story or a fairy tale, and so let it go in one ear and out the other. So also, the apostles and believers in the beginning of Christianity, with great diligence and attention to the holy prophets, have read sayings of

the articles of faith with sharp eyes, drawn out, and clearly explained. It can be seen in Eph. 4, 8 ff., that St. Paul refers to this saying from the 68th Psalm: "You have ascended on high" 2c., and consolingly describes the fruit and power of the ascension of Christ.

(4) The same words of the prophet, as St. Paul declared, were read by many of the noble people in the papacy before that time, but they were not understood, except by very few. And even though it was preached yearly that Christ had gone to heaven, it still came to nothing. For no one knew, much less believed, that Christ had ascended to heaven for our good, comfort and salvation, that through his ascension we should be freed, released and set free from our prison, which held us all captive 2c. Now this is a mighty saying, therefore let us see what it contains.

First, David says: "You have ascended on high" 2c. The prophet often calls our Lord Christ, who ascended on high, "God" in the same Psalm. But how does it rhyme that God should ascend on high, who is so high that nothing is or can be higher than he, so that everything is subject to him? Therefore the Scripture also calls Him the Most High [Acts 7:48]. How then did he ascend on high? With these short words: "You ascended on high" 2c. the prophet indicates that the person, Christ, is true God and man. For if He ascended, He must have descended before; as St. Paul very finely indicates from the words of the prophet, and concludes Eph. 4:8 ff. when he says: "But that He ascended, what is it but that He descended before into the lowest parts of the earth? He who descended is the same who ascended above all the heavens to fill them all." He descended before, that is, he was the most wicked and despised of men to behold, as it is written in Isa. 53:2, 3: "He had no form nor beauty" 2c. "He was the most despised and unworthy, full of pain and sickness. He was so despised that people hid their faces from him; therefore we esteemed him nothing" 2c. Therefore

If he could not descend any lower, there is no man on earth who has been so deeply humbled and descended as he, so that St. Paul's words, "He descended," would stand firm and remain true. For he let himself down into the lowest depth, under the law, under the devil, death, sin and hell; that is, I think, the last and lowest depth. Therefore this saying demands that this person, who ascended on high, descended beforehand, and therefore was not only true, eternal God, from eternity of the Father, but also true, natural man, born of Mary the Virgin, when the time was fulfilled.

(6) But what is the cause that he has gone down so low? Isaiah the prophet shows it in Cap. 53, 5. where he says: "He is wounded for our iniquity, and broken for our sin." Read the same whole chapter. And John 1:29: "Behold, this is the Lamb of God, which taketh upon Himself the sin of the world, and beareth it." 2c. There you hear that the world is in sin and condemnation, from which no creature in heaven or on earth has been able to help it. But if it should be helped, God Himself must provide counsel and help, namely in this way: He has, says Isaiah in the place mentioned above, cast all our sins on Him, on Christ, His only Son. The same sins of all of us (and all misfortunes and miseries that follow sin) lie on the neck of this Lamb of God; He redeems them by His blood, as Isaiah says: "By His wounds we are healed" 2c.

7 Therefore, because the whole world was guilty of death because of sin (for death, says St. Paul Rom. 5, 12, came into the world through sin), he let death reign over him, so that he devoured it, like all other men on earth, died, was buried, and also went down to hell among the devils, the like of which no man can go so deep. But because it was impossible that his soul (as St. Peter says Apost. 2, 27.) should be left in hell, and his flesh should see decay, he had to go up again from this depth and death, that is, to the right hand of God. He could not descend any lower, nor could he ascend any higher. For nothing

is lower than hell; nothing higher than the right hand of God. He has tried both; we will also have to learn and try both. But we have the advantage that he, "the breaker", Mich. 2, 13, has gone up for us, broken the way and made it right, so that we can happily follow him, if we believe in him otherwise. He has gone through it all, so that he may take it all in, and as St. Paul says [Eph. 4:10], fulfill it all. He wants and has to be in all places.

It certainly follows that this God, who is described in the 68th Psalm as having ascended on high, must also be truly human, so that in this short verse: "You have ascended on high" 2c., that God has taken on human nature, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Mary the Virgin, died, rose again from the dead, ascended to heaven, sits at the right hand of God 2c. For, should he ascend, he had to descend first, that is, he had to become true, natural man, take upon himself the sin of all the world, suffer death 2c. But if he should ascend again, capture the prison (that holds us captive), distribute gifts among men, and rule mightily over sin, death, the devil, hell, and all creatures, then he must not only be man, but also true, eternal, natural God. For these are not works of a creature, but of the Creator Himself 2c. So St. Paul looked at this saying with almost sharp eyes, when he says [Eph. 4, 10]: "He who descended into the lowest parts of the earth is the same who ascended above all heavens, that he might fill all things." And thus concludes briefly that in these words, "Thou hast ascended on high," 2c., is comprehended the birth, death, resurrection, and everlasting kingdom of Christ.

(9) Now that he has gone out, what is he doing? What is his office? Does he sit on a golden chair above, and let the angels play and court before him; or is he idle? No. Listen to what the prophet and St. Paul say: He not only went up, but also led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men. There you hear what he did for

has an office. He is doing two things: He has caught the prison, he does not stop yet, he keeps it caught without interruption; that is one. The other: He has given gifts to men, still gives them without ceasing until the end of the world, and distributes them 1) among his Christians.

Now this is spoken very sweetly and comfortingly, when he says that he has caught the prison. The Scriptures often speak in the same way in other places, as Gal. 2, 19: "I died to the law through the law" 2c. Rom. 8, 2: "The law of the Spirit, which quickeneth in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Item, v. 3: "God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemning sin in the flesh through sin." And 2 Cor. 5, 21: "GOD made Him who knew of no sin to be sin for us, that we might become in Him the righteousness that is before GOD." So also Hosea 13, 14: "I will deliver them 'out of hell, and save them from death. Death, I will be your death; covering, I will be your poison." Item, Luc. 11, 22: The stronger (Christ) overcomes the strong (the devil). So here also: "He has led the prison captive," does not mean: He has taken away the prison; otherwise it might return for many years; but: He has captured it, so that no one may capture it from now on.

(11) What then is the prison that Christ has caught? Some have drawn and interpreted it to mean that Christ, when he ascended to heaven, delivered the holy ancients from the outer castle of hell. But that this is not the opinion is shown by the words themselves, which hold out to us another prison, which imprisons me and you, and all men, namely a spiritual one, by which the soul is imprisoned, and is held captive to eternal death, if it is not redeemed by him who ascended on high, as a thief or murderer is to bodily death.

(12) This prison, then, which takes us captive and holds us, is the law, sin, death, the devil and hell. For there stands the

The law commands and urges us to be pious, to love God with all our heart, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We do not do this, and it is impossible for us to do it. But because we do not, it takes us captive, that is, it accuses us and passes judgment on us that we are guilty of eternal death and damnation. For this is the sentence of Moses 27:26: "Cursed be he that fulfilleth not all the words of this law, to do them." Or, as St. Paul repeats this saying and explains Gal. 3, 10: "Cursed be every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." Oh God! What a horrible, terrible judgment this is! So I hear that if a man kept the whole law, and lacked only one thing, he would still be cursed? Yes, indeed, because Moses clearly says [Deut. 27:26]: "Cursed be he who does not fulfill all the words" 2c. This is also what St. James means when he says [Jac. 2, 10.]: "If anyone keeps the whole law and sins against one person, he is completely guilty." Yes, you cannot keep the least of the law, be you outwardly so pious as you will; how then would you keep it altogether? Nor was it given by God to be kept by human power, so that it should or could make man blessed. For if it could do so, Christ would be of no use to us at all, Gal. 2:21, but for this reason it was given, that man should recognize his sin, inability and condemnation from it, and thus despair of himself through learning the law, and seek counsel and help elsewhere, namely from Christ.

Therefore do as you will, the law takes you captive. If you do not feel it now, the hour will come when the world will make it too tight for you. Then you say: How can I get out of this prison? Despair of yourself and all your strength, and hold on to the person called Christ, who has gone up and caught the prison. If thou lackest the man, thou shalt be eternally shut up and imprisoned in this prison; no creature, no saint, nor angel shall be able to help thee out. But if thou holdest fast to him, thou shalt be saved. For Christ has imprisoned the law, not for his own sake.

1) In the original: theilets.

Person, but to us to good, that if we believe in him, it must give us up, and can not see further.

14 How then did it come to pass that Christ caught the law? This is what St. Paul teaches when he says Gal. 4:4 ff: "When the time was fulfilled, God sent his Son, born of a woman, who was under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive the adoption. Item, Cap. 3, 11: "By the law no man is justified in the sight of God," indeed, it only makes transgression and sin more powerful, Rom. 5, 20. [Gal. 3, 13. f.:] "But Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on wood), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus."

(15) Here you hear that Christ has crawled into the prison where we all lie locked up and imprisoned. How did this happen? He was a man full of all grace, righteousness, life, yes, he was life itself; and yet he put himself under the law. Then the law comes, addresses him, wants to have a promise to him and to deal with him as with all Adam's children. Christ is silent about it, lets the law (the cruel tyrant, who passes a sentence of death on the whole human race, and says: "Cursed be everyone" 2c.) rule over him, and without any guilt accuses and condemns himself by the law as a cursed sinner; yes, he bears the title and shame that he himself is a curse, and perishes, dies and is buried. Now won't cried the law. But it did not know that it had so shamefully transgressed, condemned God's Son and so miserably executed, and as a blasphemer and rebel murdered by death on the cross. Because it has now condemned and damned the one who was innocent and to whom it had no right, yes, the one who was the lord of the law and creator of all creatures, it must again take the blame, be captured and nailed to the cross and condemned, and lose all its power, and lie under the feet of the one it condemned for eternity.

16. do you want to be a happy, good, safe person?

If you want to know and be free from the prison of the law, hold on to Christ, who has become the master of the law and has caught it. If thou believest in him, thou shalt have safe, free conduct. For Christ has caught it for you, that you should not only be free from the law, but also rule over it, through and in him. This is what St. Paul means when 1) he says Gal. 3, 13: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law when he became a curse for us." And Col. 2, 13. 14.: "He gave us all our sin, and blotted out the handwriting that was against us, which came into being by statute and was against us, and took it out of the remedy, and nailed it to the cross" 2c.

(17) But as the law takes us captive, so sin also takes us captive, making us afraid, despondent, and stupid in conscience, so that we are afraid of a rustling leaf. How then do we do it, that we may be loosed from the prison of sins? Look at Christ, who has caught the prison, and has condemned and taken away sin in the flesh by sin. How so? He became a sinner, yes, sin itself, and thus by his sin he canceled and took away the sin of the world. Of this St. Paul says, as reported above [§ 10], Rom. 8, 3.: "God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemning sin in the flesh through 2) sin, that righteousness, required by the law, might be fulfilled in us." And 2 Cor. 5:21: "God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become in him the righteousness that is before God."

18 Here you hear that Christ takes away sin and condemns sin through sin of the world. But a strange, whimsical speech it is, that sin takes away sin, sin condemns sin. Would it not be finer to say, righteousness taketh away sin, or, Christ by his righteousness took away sin from the world and condemned it? No. Why? Because the sin and punishment of the whole world is on Christ's neck, Joh. 1, 29. "Behold,

1) Thus in the first relation and in the Eisleben edition. Wittenberger: that.

2) Thus in the first relation and in the Eisleben edition. Wittenberg: by the.

This is God's Lamb, who takes upon Himself the sin of the world and bears it," and is rewarded for it by His suffering and death. Therefore he is under sin, counted by the law of Moses as a cursed man, and considered the worst of sinners, hanging between two murderers as an arch-villain, and there the saying of the 69th Psalm, v. 10, is fulfilled: "The reproach of them that reproach thee is fallen upon me"; and Ps. 41, 5: "I said, Lord, have mercy on me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee. Christ speaks these and similar words, and speaks them as a sinner. If Christ has committed no sin, neither is any deceit found in his mouth; how then is he a sinner? Because of his person he is not a sinner, but pure, holy, righteous, even righteousness itself 2c. But he is the Lamb of God, who took upon himself my sin, and thine, and the sin of all the world; and for the same he shed his own blood. So Christ by his sin (for he became a sin and a curse for us) has torn, cast out and condemned all the sin of the world. If you believe in him, his sin is so powerful that it tears away and condemns your sin and the sin of all believers.

19. then see to it that when your sin weighs you down and makes you fearful, that you do no work to quench and purge it, or you labor in vain; but hold fast to Christ, through whom sin is sung and has already received its judgment, just as a murderer who receives his judgment because of his iniquity sees certain death before his eyes, for the judgment has already been passed upon him. What kind of life can he have, which is nothing else than a walk to death?

20 Thus sin is still stirring in us, but it has already passed its judgment, is now completely weak and powerless, and can never condemn us, for it is smitten and imprisoned by Christ. And the more fiercely she looks at the Christians, the less she accomplishes, yes, only gives her the greater cause through such her condemnation to call to her Lord Christ for help. So Christ is there and says: "You damned and now powerless sin, you may well afflict my Christians, and you may not be able to help them.

But thou shalt not gain anything by them; yea, thou shalt be damned, and shalt not accuse them before me. What sin does to the Christian's conscience has no power, because Christ, who was made sin for us, overcame sin and condemned it. That is to say, sin with sin expelled. From this we see that Christ does not sit idly up in heaven, but without ceasing strikes at our enemies and takes them captive, so that they cannot harm us who believe in him and comfort us with his victory.

(21) Death, even of our enemies, is one at which all the world is terrified and terrified. Nor is there any king, emperor or empress so strong and powerful who could resist him; they all have to serve him, be they great or small, young or old, rich or poor, noble or ignoble, and let themselves be strangled and devoured by him; against this there is no remedy, advice or help. How then shall we escape from him, and remain unswallowed by him? If you want to be released from his prison and become free, let your good works and strict life go, because you will and can do nothing with them (the giant is too strong, he cannot be beaten with human laws and commandments of caps, plates and what is more), but turn around and see what work Christ has done; he is the right man, who overcame and devoured our death by his death, Hos. 13:4. How did this happen? Death attacked Christ, wanted to swallow a little bite, opened his mouth wide, and ate him up like all other men. Christ did not resist him, but let himself be swallowed by death and remained stuck in his throat until the third day. But the cute little bite did not like death, could not digest it, because it was too strong for him; therefore he must give it up again and strangle it.

(22) Thus Christ, by his innocent death, has overcome our death, which is terrible to all the world. If we now believe in him, we must indeed die in time, be scarred and rot; but we have this advantage, that our temporal death is henceforth an entrance into eternal life.

Moreover, the death we suffer is no longer a real death, that is, a terrible death, but a painted death, yes, a sweet sleep. The death of Christ, who overcame and captured our death, settles all this. This means then, as the Scripture speaks of it, death overcome with death, and poison driven out with poison. Of this miraculous victory and overcoming, one death against the other, Hosea the prophet Cap. 13, 14. says in the person of Christ: "Death, I will be a death to you. As if he wanted to say: You sorrowful death, you kill, tear away and devour the whole human race. Well, you shall not do it forever, yes, soon I will come to you, that you have to hold out to me again, and let yourself be eaten. So that all who believe in me must not only leave you untouched and devoured forever, but also trample you underfoot and be lords over you through me. From this we see how blessed, wholesome and powerful the death of our Lord Christ is, how he lashes out and stabs with all his might and power, grasps the mouth of the death of which we were prisoners, knocks out its teeth, and blunts its spear and thorn, so that we, who believe in him, cannot be bitten, stung or strangled from now on, but are now salvific and worthy in his sight, and in sum, a blessed entrance to eternal life, as the arch-father Simeon looked upon death, and joyfully sang [Luc. 2, 29]: "With peace and joy I go" 2c.

So we see that death is not terrible for us Christians, but comforting. But from where? Because Christ has ascended on high, sits at the right hand of God, and has overcome our enemies, so that even though they make us sad and sorrowful, they cannot harm us. Therefore, we should not be afraid of Christ as of a strict, angry tyrant and judge, as he is presented and imagined to us in the papacy, but we should give ourselves all good things to him as to our faithful Savior, intercessor, shepherd and bishop of our souls, who not only overcame and imprisoned sin, death and all misfortune for our good, but also gave us a good life without any evil.

We are not to be harmed by all our enemies from now on in eternity. From this, I say, you see that in Christ we have such a high priest and all-powerful, merciful king [Ps. 110:6], who reconciles and represents both of us before God, and powerfully defends us against the devil's and the evil world's raging and raging, and preserves us without their will. The only thing missing is that we do not believe it, or believe it weakly. For if we believed it to be certain, we would not be so fainthearted and despondent, would not mourn and lament so, but would lift up our heads and take comfort in the unspeakable grace of God that has befallen us in Christ. Much less would we have so shamefully forgotten this great grace and benefit, and have undertaken other ways and means to put away sin, to obtain God's grace and blessedness, than by our own efforts, good works, monasticism, masses, vigils, false worship, pilgrimages, and other innumerable ways 2c.

24 If then our sin, as we have said, is caught and taken away by Christ, the law cannot condemn us, nor has death any further right or power over us; for the law cannot convince us that we are sinners, because Christ crucified and took them away. It follows that even the devil can do nothing against us. For through Christ we are delivered from the power and kingdom of the devil, which is a kingdom of darkness, error, sin and death, because he has transferred us into his kingdom [Eph. 2:4 ff], which is a kingdom of light, right understanding, righteousness and life. So we must not be afraid of hell either, because hell and all other enemies of ours he, the dear Lord, has captured. This is what St. Paul means when he says 1 Cor. 15, 54. 55. 58: "Death is swallowed up in victory! Death, where is your sting? Hell, where is your victory? Thanks be to God, who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

25 Let this be said of the first part, that Christ ascended on high and caught the prison, that is, he overcame sin, death, the devil, hell, and all calamities, and gave us who believe that it is ours to suffer.

1) Erlanger Ausgabe, in both the first and second editions, as does Walch: "Luc. 2, 20."

The way to heaven is opened by the fact that it happened in the first place. These are all unbelievable, yes, impossible words, if we take our reason to counsel. But the prophets and apostles, driven by the Holy Spirit, speak of it as happily and surely as if they saw it before their eyes, felt it in their hearts, and had comfort and joy from it. But we, because we do not see nor grope [Isa. 42, 19.] how sin and death are caught, but feel the contradiction, do not believe it, much less does our heart feel it, will keep silent that it should have comfort and joy from it. For when the time is present that death is to come, it is clear how we believe this. Yes, if we could then hide in a mouse hole, or if it were possible, crawl deep into the earth and hide, and thereby escape death, we would do it. Nevertheless, if you want to remain otherwise unensnared by death, you must believe that Christ has ascended on high, and is sitting at the right hand of God, and has caught death, so that it should and must leave you uncaptured.

(26) It will remain that sin will afflict you, death will terrify you, God's judgment will make your conscience fearful as long as you live. But how should you do it here? You certainly do not have to judge yourself according to how you feel; you do not have to say, "Woe is me, death wants to devour me! O reproach, hell opens wide its jaws, and will devour me; but take courage and confidence in Christ, and trample under foot such thoughts, and say, It is not, O woe, death will devour me; but it is, My Lord Christ is gone up on high, and hath caught the prison. The "going up" will probably forbid you, you sorrowful death, that you must leave me undevoured and uneaten. I shall be free, and I am free, for the sake of the man who has gone up.

(27) This is the right, certain way, by which the meek overcome sin, death 2c. For you hear that here no letter of indulgence, caps, plates, intercession of the saints, pilgrimages 2c. are thought of, but that they grasp this (or the like) saying: "You have caught the prison" 2c. with firm faith,

and base themselves on it, and thus penetrate from death into life. But this art cannot be grasped so soon, as many think when they hear it only once, they have learned it. No, brother, not by a long shot, you are far from it. It truly requires a firm, strong faith, not a loose delusion or conceit of the heart, as sure men and hypocrites have, but which stands and rests on it with all deliberation and certain confidence, that Christ has ascended on high 2c. Where this faith is, man cannot despair; indeed, he rejoices with all his heart that Christ has taken the prison captive; therefore he knows well that he will be and remain uncaptured by the devil, death 2c.

28. Such faith, as I said, is not a drowsy, idle thought in the heart, but a gift and work of the Holy Spirit in us, who transforms us and makes us new men, to regard such unspeakable grace of God, acquired and given through Christ, with earnestness, and to thank Him for it from the heart with these or similar words: Ah, merciful God, how kind and blessed a father you are, who acts so fatherly and cordially with us poor, damned sinners, throwing your own Son, Jesus Christ, your highest and best good, into the jaws of death, the devil 2c. into the boat, and decree that he shall go down into the deep 1) that he may go up again, and take captive the prison that imprisoned us all 2c. Where such joy is not felt by the heart, but is straitened and terrified, it is a sure sign that it is without faith. Therefore, this joy, as I said in the beginning, is so high that one cannot preach enough about it; indeed, no human heart can ever grasp it enough here on earth, it must be saved for that life, otherwise a man would die of joy. Now let us go over the other part recently and talk a little about it.

You have received gifts for the people.

29. two kinds of office, I have said [§ 9], Christ has, with which he deals without ceasing to-

1) Thus the first relation and the Eisleben one. Wittenberger: down.

walks and drives. The first, all our enemies and misfortunes, which look upon us men and make us fearful and anxious, he has caught, so that, though they may afflict us as long as we live, yet they cannot harm us. The other thing is that he gives gifts to men and distributes them abundantly, that is, he sends them the Holy Spirit and adorns them with various gifts, as St. Paul indicates in Eph. 4:11, 12: "Christ," he says, "has appointed some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, so that the saints may all be sent to the work of the ministry, building up the body of Christ. This is why he distributes various gifts among his believers, so that the gospel may be preached in various languages throughout the world, so that unbelievers may be converted and many people brought to faith, so that they may grow in grace and knowledge and be saved. For this purpose, one may interpret the Scriptures, another may test the spirits, the third may know many languages and interpret them to others, and so on, 1 Cor. 12:8 ff.

30 Christ once, on the day of Pentecost, visibly gave the Holy Spirit to the apostles, so that they all saw their tongues divided as if they were on fire, speaking with various tongues, casting out devils, healing the sick, cleansing the lepers. Raising the dead 2c. This happened in the beginning of Christianity because the preaching of the gospel was new and previously unheard; but if it was to be accepted and believed, Christ had to confirm it with miraculous signs and various gifts distributed among the believers. But now, until the end of the world, he does not give the Holy Spirit and his gifts in such a way as he did then, but secretly and invisibly to his Christians.

31 But as little as reason believes that Christ has overcome and captured all our enemies, sin, death, 2c. so little does it believe that Christ distributes gifts among men. For when the apostles received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and spake with new tongues, and stood up in Jerusalem, and preached, and went into all Judea, and Samaria, and afterward into all the world, according to Christ's command, and preached the gospel in all places, they did not believe.

Who was aware of the end, and confirmed their preaching with signs and wonders? Who believed that it was right with them? Yes, they heard from their own Jews that they were mad and full of sweet wine; item, that they were possessed and full of devils, and were both executed by Jews and Gentiles as blasphemers, deceivers and seditious evildoers. Therefore the world does not see and recognize the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but despises and blasphemes them as the work of the devil; and indeed everything that our Lord God speaks and does is not and must not be right for the world. Yes, it considers his word to be heresy and the devil's doctrine; in turn, it accepts the devil's doctrine for God's word. God's work must be of no value to it, indeed, it must be devilish; again, the devil's work is highly esteemed by it, and it calls it God's work. But Christians recognize and consider God's word to be the highest treasure on earth, and recognize the dignity and power of his great, divine works; even though they do not sufficiently marvel at them, praise them, and extol them, as they should.

(32) As it happened to the apostles, so it happens to us now; bishops, princes and lords consider us heretics, seducers, rebellious and devilish people. Thus they honor and praise our gifts, which our Lord Christ distributes among us. Neither do the spirits of the Red Men make it any better, they do not see any gifts of the Spirit in us either. What they speak and do is spiritual, yes, the spirit itself; but what we poor sinners teach and do is carnal and devilish, yes, the devil himself. Nevertheless the saying of the prophet stands firm, "Thou hast received gifts for men." Christ also always finds those who accept, hear and believe his word, to whom he gives his Spirit, whom they alone recognize and no one else, what gifts they receive from him, and they thank him for them.

(33) In the papacy, which is the basis of all abominations and heresies, he nevertheless had his own, on whom he poured out his spirit and gifts. They have also seen and understood that the pope is the true end-Christ, and his commandment and human law are the doctrine of the devil.

Pabst and his teachings. But what they did, they had to do secretly, were not allowed to protest, or they would have had to be burned to powder as heretics. Nor was it yet time for the right light to shine and expose the abominations and lies of the Pabst. But now, by God's grace, it shines brightly and clearly, and one sees before one's eyes what the Pabstacy is.

34 You have now heard in these words of the prophet that Christ ascended on high and received his kingdom and dominion from God (as the 110th Psalm, v. 1. And that he does not sit idly on high, but has to work here on earth, in his Christianity, without ceasing until the end of the world, namely, that he first takes prison captive, redeems us from sin and death, gives the Holy Spirit, who cleanses our hearts through faith, so that we put off our old Adam together with the lusts and desires, and put on the new man. Secondly, that he does not impute the rest of our sins to us, but forgives and covers them, if we persevere in faith, and does not let sin reign [Rom. 6, v. 12], but kills it through the Spirit. He also gives us his gifts, and strengthens us to preach and confess his word fearlessly, and to fear no one, let God grant, be it tyrants, ruffraff, sin, death, devils, or hell. Furthermore, you have heard that the world neither recognizes nor believes such grace and good deeds of Christ, and even condemns them and makes a mockery of them. Only Christians, who judge themselves by the word, know and understand that we are perfect in Christ,

Col. 2, 10, and yet still not pure of all things full of sins. For we are sometimes, yes, often hasty, that we are challenged with doubt, unbelief 2c., grumble against God, are angry with our neighbor, resent him. And that the dear prophets could have spoken much better of Christ, who was to crush the serpent's head and bless all the world, so long before he ever preached it publicly in all the world, that they are far superior to us, who read and also hear the Scriptures preached daily, and believe that everything is arranged through Christ and given to us. Blessed are those who believe it and accept it with thanksgiving.

35 In these short words, the fruit and benefit of Christ's ascension is finely described, that he ascended for our benefit (as in all other things), and therefore sits at the right hand of God, that he might help us and adorn us with his gifts, and comfort us in all our needs. Whoever knows and believes this, will find the Ascension of Christ salutary and comforting, and will come before God in the name of Christ with a happy conscience, saying: I thank thee, thou eternal, merciful God and Father, that thou hast given thy dear, united Son to us poor sinners, who took on human nature, suffered, was crucified and died for us, and rose again from death, ascended into heaven, and has caught our prison which imprisons us, that now through him we are thy dear children, and his brethren, and joint heirs of all his eternal heavenly goods. Give grace and your Holy Spirit to sustain us in this faith to our end, amen.

VII. Interpretation of the preacher

Finished in lectures in November 1526. Printed in 1532.

Newly translated from Latin.

Ecclesiastes Solomon

with notes by D. Wart. Luther. 1532.

Preface by Doctor Martin Luther on Ecclesiastes,

laid out from the school in Wittenberg.

Because this book was translated from the Hebrew in a sinister manner, all kinds of learned people have set about interpreting it, and all have endeavored to apply some sayings of it to their state, or rather to their delusions, whether out of presumption, which delights in dark and, as it were, new and unusual things, or because it is easy to invent and conjecture anything arbitrary in dark writings.

For the philosophers thought that what he says right at the beginning [Cap. 1, 8]: "Everything is so full of trouble that no one can talk it out" refers to them, as if Solomon is talking about the worldly wisdom that plays with thoughts. Some have also 1) taken offense at the word, since Solomon says [Cap. 3, 19]:

1) Instead of enim in the Erlanger we have assumed with the Wittenberger and the Jena Minna.

*) In 1526 (not only in 1532, as the Erlangen edition, 6X6A. opp., tom. XXI, x. III), Luther gave lectures on Ecclesiastes, and finished them in November of that year (Köstlin, M. Luther f34j, vol. II, p. 156). Fast-writing listeners caught the lectures and spread them among friends. Luther himself considered publishing this interpretation of his (De Wette, III, 222), but refrained from doing so when he heard that in 1528 Brenz was planning to have his interpretation of Ecclesiastes printed by Johann Secerius, printer at Hagenau. In the form of a friendly letter to the printer, Luther wrote a preface to "Joh. Brentii Auslegung des Predigers Salomo, Hagenau 1528." (Walch, old edition, vol. XIV, 188, with the erroneous date 1527.) It was not until 1532 that others, with Luther's consent, also put a postscript of his lectures into print. The time of writing is confirmed by two letters of Luther in De Wette, Vol. III, p. 120 and 130, both from 1526, and also by a passage in our writing: "wie es fängst (nper) den Bauern widerfahren ist", from which Köstlin 1. 0. p. 647 draws attention. The first single edition appeared under the title: "Deelesianws Kolomonis, ouni Vnnotntionidus Ooe. Llart. Inrtü. VuittemböiMtz. 1. 5. 32." At the end: "Vtiiskur*no oxeudsdar "Ioannos ImM. 1. 5. 32.", and still in the same year at the same another edition. In 1536, under the same title, but with the indication: eorrootus "b oinernlatius oum indios sto., another edition came out with Peter Brubach in Schwäbisch-Hall. Justus Jonas made a German translation, which was published in 1533 by "Georgen Rhaw" in Wittenberg and was provided with a dedication "to the Landgrave [Philipp] of Hesse" dated May 1, 1533. Peter Seitz at Wittenberg reprinted the same in 1538. In the collections: in the Latin Wittenberg (1552), tom. IV, col. 1; in the Jena one (1603), bom. III, col. 230 and in the Erlangen, 6X0F. opp., boM. XXI, x>. 1 German according to Jonas' translation: Wittenberger (1559), vol. XII, p. 81; Altenburger, vol. V, p. 1181 and in the Leipziger, vol. VI, p. 570. I "replaced this old translation, which is also found in Walch, with a new one according to the Wittenberg edition, comparing the Jena and Erlangen editions. In this work, we recognized that the first Wittenberg edition contains many printing errors, some of which are corrected in the so-called "improved" edition of 1536, but that nevertheless the advantage lies significantly on the side of the Wittenberg edition. For in the edition published in Schwäbisch-Hall, whose text the Erlangen edition reproduces, many errors have been corrected, a number of omissions, and in addition probably at least as many new printing errors as the first edition had. The "Erlang" edition has faithfully reproduced all of this.

"As the cattle dies, so dies the man. And both have the same end and the same breath" 2c. They have thought that he was an Epicurer, or at least speaks in the person of Epicurians.

But no one has used this book in a more pernicious way than the schools of the theologians who have used this passage [Cap. 9, 1. according to the Vulgate]: "Man does not know whether he is worthy of hatred or love", on the conscience against God and have twisted it in such a way that they have miserably tortured the consciences of all by this distortion and have completely eradicated the very certain faith in Christ with the whole knowledge of Christ, by teaching and inculcating nothing more serious in the poor afflicted hearts than that we had to doubt and be uncertain about the grace and love of God toward us, however blamelessly we lived. So thick was the more than Egyptian darkness that they no longer saw the writings of the apostles and evangelists before this saying of Solomon, rather before their own errors, which they had forcibly brought into this saying, which testify with such great signs, scriptural passages and proofs that Christ is our mediator and the author of the very certain grace and blessedness, which is offered and given to us by God out of grace for free.

Many of the holy fathers and outstanding teachers in the church have done no less harm through this book, which they misunderstood, since they thought that Solomon teaches through this book the contempt of the world (as they call it), that is, the contempt of the things that God has created and ordered. Among these is St. Jerome, who through this book urged his Blesilla to monastic life, since he published an interpretation about it. Therefore, the theology of the monks or hermits, in which it was taught that it was Christian to leave the trade, the worldly government, even the episcopate or, more correctly, the apostolic office, to flee into the deserts, to separate oneself from the society of men, to live in silence and stillness, flowed and spread throughout the whole Church like a flood of sin.

Whether Solomon calls the marriage state, the imperial state (imperia), office and service of the word "vain", all of which he praises here extraordinarily and calls gifts of God. And while Solomon teaches that men themselves, or their proposals, are vain, they turn everything around, and call things vain, but think that they themselves and their own actions are well-founded and right, dreaming just the opposite of what Solomon says. In short, they have brought us nothing but abominable things (monstra) out of this very beautiful and exceedingly useful book, and, as is evident, they have cast abominable idols out of the divine gold.

Therefore, in order to enlighten this darkness and to destroy the so shameful idols, I have the more easily allowed that these notes of mine, which are taken from the hand of others and have received this form in my lecture (because due to many affairs I have not been able to interpret this book myself in a due commentary), are published. For although they are only meager and small, they can give those who have nothing better, or who, like me, were once seduced by false glosses, a reason to become better themselves and to find better things. For me, at least, it gave me great pleasure to get even a small taste of this booklet, after I had labored with it all my life, and had martyred myself in vain and corrupted myself by ungodly opinions against the faith of Christ. For this I give thanks with great joy to the Father of Mercy, who has graciously condescended to renew this last time with so many revelations and by such a great light.

Now this book, Ecclesiastes, we might more properly call Solomon's book of worldly government (Politica) or of housekeeping (Oeconomica), not, of course, as if it gave laws or ordered how to govern a state or a family (for this the law of nature amply directs, or human reason, to which earthly things are subject, Gen. 1, 28.; it is of all laws, both in worldly government and in housekeeping, always the source, the

It is still and must remain), but that it gives a man, who has to work in the worldly regiment or in the household, advice in cases of tribulation, and instructs the heart and strengthens it to patience in the suffering of all kinds of misfortune. For there are innumerable accidents, as the books of all sacred histories, even the fables of all poets testify, as there are the works of Hercules, the conquest of monsters by Ulysses and others, as also for David the bear, the lion and Goliath 2c. [1 Sam. 17, 34. ff.] He who does not know this art finally grows weary, gives way and falls, and does a great fall, as Timon, Demosthenes, Cicero and others more have fallen. Out of such impatience the heretics in the church have also caused havoc,

because they could not bear their office because of the wickedness of men. Thus (as it is said in the proverb) despair has made monks, for it is true what that wise man [Bias] said: Regiment shows what kind of man one is. But unless some Solomon exhorts and comforts, regiment crushes a man and takes away his strength and ruins him completely.

Therefore, I commend to godly brethren this my Solomon, of whom it could more properly be said that he is pointed to than that he is interpreted, and I wish that someone with a richer spirit and better gifts may come forth to explain and accentuate this book properly to the praise of God and His creatures, to whom be praise forever through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Ecclesiastes of Solomon with notes by D. Martin Luther.*)

This book is one of the most difficult books of the whole Scripture, which no one has yet completely recovered; indeed, it has been so corrupted by the improper interpretations of many that it is almost a greater task to cleanse and free the author from the dreams of those people that have been carried into it, than to show its right meaning. But there has been a twofold cause why this book has been exceedingly obscure to others. One is that they did not see the intention and the purpose (scopum) of the author; as one must hold and follow this in every kind of writings, so here it is most important that uian do this. The other cause comes from their ignorance of the Hebrew language and a certain peculiar way of speaking of the author, which often deviates from the usual use of language and is very far from our way of speaking. So it happened that this book, which is worth in many respects, that it would be daily in the hands of all people, and everyone, but especially the leaders of a community, would be known in the best way (because in the same is the right management of human affairs).

the private as well as the public, in the most beautiful way [graphice], and how

Nowhere else described), has been deprived of its name and dignity until now, and has lain there miserably despised, so that today we have neither custom nor fruit of it. Namely, so much has the sacrilege or ignorance of others been able to do. Therefore, this should be our first effort, that we note the certain purpose (scopum) of the book, what it strives for and what it has in mind. For if one does not know this, it is impossible to understand the writing and the manner of speaking.

Now it is the epitome and purpose of this book that Solomon may make us confident and calm of heart in the common affairs and cases of this life, so that we may live contentedly with what is present, without worry and desire of the future (as Paul [Phil. 4, 6.] says: "Worry nothing"), for worrying about the future makes futile sorrow.

However, it concludes Solomon by a kind of continuous introduction of individual things (in-

*)This is the title of the Jena and Erlangen editions, but of the Wittenberg edition: "Wovon der Prediger Salomo handelt.

ductione) that the endeavors and efforts of individual men are vain and void, so that he draws a general conclusion from the individual, and shows that the endeavors of all men are vain. For he says [chap. 9:11] that to be skillful does not help to nourish, nor to be swift to run, nor to be strong to win; rather, the wiser, holier, busier a man wants to be, the less he accomplishes, and both wisdom and righteousness and his work will be in vain. Therefore, if neither this nor other things are anything, everything must necessarily be vain and futile.

But here the error and harmful delusion of very many people must be eradicated from the beginning, so that we do not think that the author is talking about the contempt of creatures, which the Scripture does not want to be despised and condemned at all. For everything that God has made is very good, and made for the use of men, which Paul says in very clear words in 1 Tim. 4:4 ff: "All creatures of God are good, and nothing reprehensible that is received with thanksgiving. For it is sanctified by the word of GOD and prayer." Therefore it is foolish and ungodly that very many preachers direct their attacks against honor, authority, dignity, wealth, gold, good rumor, beautiful form, women, by publicly condemning God's creature. Authority or violence is divine order. The gold is good, and the wealth is given by God. A woman is something good and made a helper for the man. For God has made everything to be good and to serve man for some purpose.

Therefore, it is not the creatures that are condemned in this book, but the evil inclination and desire of men, since we are not satisfied with these present creatures of God and their use, but are always anxious and concerned to accumulate riches, to gain positions of honor, glory and great name, as if we were always living here, but in the meantime are weary of the things that are present, and always desire others, one after another. For this is the greatest vanity and lamentation, that one deprives oneself of the custom of the present goods and worries in vain about the future ones. This

I say that Solomon condemns the wrong inclinations and efforts of men in this book, not the creatures themselves; for he also says later [Cap. 5, 17. f.] of the custom of the creatures that there is nothing better for a man than that he should be of good cheer and spend his life happily, and eat and drink, and be cheerful in all his work 2c., where he would quite contradict himself if he condemned things themselves, and not rather the abuse of things, which comes only from the wrong attitude of heart.

Since some foolish people did not understand this, they brought up the unreasonable doctrine of despising and fleeing the world, and they themselves also did many unreasonable things, as we read in the descriptions of the lives of the fathers that there were some who did not even want to look at the sun (they would certainly be worthy to have their eyes plucked out), and from perverse spirituality fed on the most meager; what one is to think of this is perfectly clear from what has been said before. For he does not rightly despise the world who lives alone and apart from men; he does not rightly despise gold who throws it away or touches no money, as the Franciscans do, but he who lives in the midst of these things and yet does not set his heart on them. This, then, is the first thing that those who wish to read Solomon must consider.

It should also be noted that in this book Solomon speaks of the human race in general and remains entirely within the limits of human nature, that is, he speaks of the efforts, the pretensions, and the desires of man and of human suggestions, so that we do not fall into the same conceit as the commentators, who think that here natural history is rejected, as well as astronomy and even the study of all philosophy, and teach that these things should be despised as futile games with thoughts, who think that natural history is here rejected, as well as astronomy and even the study of all philosophy, and teach that these things should be despised as futile and useless speculations, while the usefulness of these arts is great and manifold, as can be seen every day. In addition, the study of the nature of things not only brings benefits, but also

great pleasure. The sacred Scriptures also point to things to set before us their qualities and powers, as the word of the 103rd Psalm, v. 5: "Thou shalt grow young again, like an eagle." Likewise f5 Mos. 32, 11. Vulg.): "As an eagle stirs up his young to fly." Likewise [Ps. 42, 2.]: "As the deer cries for fresh water"; and [Proverbs 6, 6.]: "Go to the ant, you lazy one," 2c. Thus everything is full of images and parables taken from the nature of things, and whoever would take these away from the holy scripture, would at the same time also take away a great light from it.

The object of this book, or what it deals with (*materia*), is therefore the human race, which is so foolish that it seeks and strives for many things with its intentions, which it cannot attain; or if it attains them, it does not enjoy them, but possesses them with heartache and damage, for which not the things are to blame, but the exceedingly foolish endeavors of the heart. Julius Caesar had to do with the nobility of seizing dominion, but how many dangers, how great hardships did this bring him? When he had obtained it, he was not calm. He did not get what he wanted, but in his greatest effort to get more, he perished most miserably.

The same thing happens in all human endeavors. If things come in abundance, there is soon weariness; if they do not come in abundance, there is an insatiable desire to have them, and there is no rest. This naughtiness of the human heart was also seen by the pagan writers. For thus Ovid says:

Quod licet ingratum est, quod non licet acrius
urit.

Quod sequitur fugio, quod fugit ipse sequor.
[That which is permitted is held worthless, for that which is not permitted there is great desire; that which follows me I flee, that which flees me I follow]. Likewise [Horace]:

Nemo sua sorte contentus vivit, et intra
Fortunam didicit nemo manere suam.

[Niemaud is content with his fate, and no one has learned to live in the

position in life). This is the vanity of the human heart, that it is never satisfied with the present gifts of God, but rather holds them in low esteem, and always seeks others, one after another, and does not rest until it obtains what it desires; and when it has obtained it, it again despises it and looks for other things.

It is therefore (to say it again) the task and the intention of this book that it instructs us that we should use with thanksgiving the present things and creatures of God, which are abundantly given and bestowed upon us by the goodness of God, without worrying about the things to come, only that we may have a calm and quiet heart and a cheerful mind, namely by being satisfied with the word and the work of God. Thus he encourages us in the following [Cap. 9, 7-9.], that we should eat and drink and be merry with the wife of our youth [Proverbs 5, 18.], that we should not lack ointment for our head, and that we should let our clothes be white, as Christ says [Matth. 6:34], "It is enough for every day to have its own plague," and as Paul says [Rom. 13:14], "Take care of the body, but in this way, so that it does not become horny." If a man obeyed this, he would have a quiet and calm heart, and God would provide everything abundantly; but now man torments himself by a twofold evil, depriving himself of the custom of the present things, and tormenting himself in vain with the care of the things to come; or if there is a custom of things, it is only a bitter one.

Cicero, a man who was so great by eloquence, could have been quite happy in his hut, if he had known how to use calm. But since this good man always desires greater things, and presses in vain for the execution of his counsels, behold how great goods he deprives himself of, and loads misfortune and ruin upon his neck. Therefore St. Augustine says well: "You have commanded, O Lord, that the man who is not satisfied with his own should have a troubled heart as a punishment.

But whoever compares the goods he has. with the evils that he does not have, he will finally recognize how great a treasure of

goods he has. He who has healthy and undamaged eyes does not esteem this benefit of God very highly, nor does he delight in it; but if he were deprived of it, behold, with how great a treasure he would gladly buy it again. This is what is done with health, and this is what is done with all other things. If God gave me Cicero's eloquence, Caesar's power or Solomon's wisdom, I would not be satisfied, because we always seek what is not there, but despise what is; if one has no wife, one seeks her; if one has her, one becomes a man.

tired of them. We are quite similar to mercury, which does not stop anywhere. The human heart is so unstable; it is not worthy to enjoy even one of God's benefits. This misery of the human heart is attacked by Solomon in this book, and he punishes the inconstancy and vanity of the human heart, that it enjoys neither the present nor the future goods, since it does not recognize the benefits it has received, nor does it give thanks for them, and vainly pursues what it does not have; that is, in truth, hanging between heaven and earth.

The first chapter.

V. 1. These are the words of Ecclesiastes, 1) the son of David, king of Jerusalem.

The title Ecclesiastes or "Preacher" is, I believe, to refer more to the name of the book than to that of the author, so that it should be understood that these were words spoken publicly by Solomon in some assembly of his princes and others. For since he was a king, it was neither his office nor his duty that he taught, but that belonged to the priests and Levites. Therefore I believe that this was spoken by Solomon in some assembly of his own, or to his table companions, or even during the meal, in the presence of some great and distinguished people, after he had thought long and hard about the nature and vanity of human things, or rather of human aspirations (*affectuum*), which he afterwards uttered in such a way (as it is wont to happen) in the presence of those people, and thereafter it is caught and collected by those very chiefs (*magistris*) of the commonwealth or church. Therefore they also confess at the end [Cap. 12, 11.] that they received this from One Shepherd and 2) together-

have brought. So also someone among us, sitting at the table, could talk about human affairs, and others would like to catch what would be said. So it is a public sermon that they heard from Solomon; after this sermon they liked to nine this book *Kohleth*; not that Solomon himself was a preacher, but because this book preaches as if it were a public sermon.

V. 2. It is all vanity, said the preacher, it is all vanity.

So far, we have come to know the concept and the purpose of the book to some extent, otherwise the difficulty will be mainly in the Hebrew words and idioms, of which there are especially many in the books of Solomon. For Solomon has a special way of speaking, and he wants to appear more delicate than his father David [Cap. 12, 10.], and his speech is much more pictorial and decorated with more figures of speech. He does not speak after the manner of the people, but of the court of princes (*aulice*); David's speech is simpler and yet does not lack passable images. Solomon, however, has introduced the courtly way of speaking, and just as the courtiers are wont to corrupt the simple manner of speech of the fathers, especially in writing, so also Solomon, lest he be

1) In Latin, instead of the preceding words, which are also found in the Vulgate, there is only the word: *Oonoio*, that is, sermon.

2) st is missing in the Erlanger.

as the common people seem to speak, somewhat departed from the simplicity of the fathers, and from Moses, who is the very simplest, and yet has many excellent images, like David, but common.

"It is all vanity" [in Latin *vanitas vanitatum*, vanity above all vanity] is a Hebrew way of speaking. For since the Hebrews have neither superlative nor comparative, they must express the superlative or even the comparative by a cluster of words (*compositionem*). Thus they say: Song of Songs (*Canticum canticorum* - the Song of Songs), that is, the highest and most excellent song which Solomon made. Vanity of vanities (*vanitas vanitatum*), that is, the greatest and highest vanity and entirely a complete vanity. All this he says not against the things themselves, but against the human heart, which misuses things to its detriment. But the fact that the words "vanity of vanities" are doubled, and that "everything is vanity" is added, is a fullness of words peculiar to Solomon.

By this beginning, however, he indicates, as it were, the theme of the whole book and the subject of which he wishes to speak, saying that he speaks of the highest and greatest vanity, how men are quite vain in all their undertakings, that they are not satisfied with what is present, of which they have no use; but neither can they enjoy what is to come; they pervert everything, even the best, into misery and vanity, through their fault, not that of things. But that this is the brief epitome of the book, you can easily see from what follows, where you see that he speaks of the vanity that men have in their works and undertakings, not in the things themselves.

V. 3. What does man gain more from all his toil under the sun?

Namely, what does he have but vanity? That is, men are drawn hither and thither by their strivings and pretensions, and what have they in such great endeavors? nothing but vanity, for they have vain strivings, "there is no profit. For they enjoy neither the present nor that which is not there, because their heart is not

They float between heaven and earth and do nothing at all. Because actually the word "vanity" means

[*vanitas*] that which we express by the word "nothing. You collect treasures, riches, violence 2c., and yet all this is nothing. Gold is something, but it is nothing to you who do not use it.

Therefore, we must take the words "of his toil" as spoken with a special emphasis. By this word he indicates that he will not deal with the works of God, in which there is holiness and salvation, as there are all creatures, but with the works of men, who let themselves be guided and driven by their own suggestions, in order to limit their misery and their laborious undertakings.

He is not talking about the work of the hands, which is commanded by God, Genesis 3:19: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread", but about our efforts and attempts, with which we strive to produce what we like. For the word *amal* [XXX] signifies rather sorrow and lamentation than a work, namely, such toil with which men labor and toil in vain. For it is an exceedingly miserable toil when one is so concerned with taking counsel and carrying out undertakings, and yet accomplishes absolutely nothing. Therefore he says: "What does man have more" 2c., that is: that man undertakes many things in order to carry out his plans, what does he have from this undertaking and from this effort but the most trivial vanity?

Under the sun.

Since he wants to describe the realm of vanity, yes, also the place of this realm, he calls this whole realm of vanity the being (*negotium*) under the sun, speaking in a special way, which we do not otherwise read in the Scriptures, so that he thereby excludes the divine works, which God Himself works, even in us, and commanded that we should perform them, which are rather above the sun, and apart from the doings of men. For the sun rises for man to go out to his work, Ps. 104:23,

that it is the light of the world, that it serves in bodily things. Under this sun, I say, these vain endeavors are carried on, with which men toil.

This again is to be remembered, in order to control the futile thought, according to which one has interpreted this of the vanity of the creatures. The creatures are indeed subject to vanity, as Paul testifies in Rom. 8, 20, but they are still good things, otherwise he would have said that the sun is vain; but he takes the sun, because he says: "Under the sun." So he is not talking about the works of God, which are good, true, and above the sun, but about the works that are under the sun, which we do in this bodily life on earth.

V. 4: One generation perishes and another comes, but the earth remains forever.

You see that he does not mention the works under the sun, but the things and creatures of God himself, as there are the generations of men, the sun, the water, the earth, and he generally understands the four elements, because also the philosophers have distinguished four elements in such a way, in which everything has its being, what is there in the world. They placed fire above the three other elements, and Solomon seems to take the sun for this elementary fire, so that he interprets with these words how he wants the words "under the sun" to be understood, so that the brief epitome of this saying is: the things of the world, as, the sun, the air, the water 2c., in which men have their being, remain constant by their certain law; they go, they return, they move 2c. as they are ordained, they have certain changes, they do not waver, neither do they err, but do what they ought, as the sun moves in its way and with certain motion 2c. But men, who have their being in these four elements, stable things, I say, cannot do so, but they waver, waver, are quite inconstant through the variety of their undertakings and desires, not satisfied with their limits, affairs, occupations 2c. Therefore, they do not interpret correctly those who are under the perishing

The first one is understood by the Jews, the second one by the Christians, since he is talking about the constant succession of the generations or the times (*saeculorum*).

V. 5, 6: The sun rises and sets and returns to its place to rise again. The wind goes to the south, and comes around to the middle power, and again to the place where it began.

Solomon continues with the description of the realm and the place of vanity, and proves the constancy of the sun from its perpetual and constant rising and setting and course. After that Solomon wants to indicate that the wind or the air follows the urge of the running sun, because this he makes in general the mistress and ruler of the elements. This sun, I say, has the wind, and directs everything by its government, and influences (temperat) by its course the air, the water, the wind 2c. When it rises, it makes the air another, as we see; when it sets, again another. So also under different circumstances it exerts different effects on the water 2c. For when the sun sets, the earth becomes moist, the water cold, the air humid 2c. Yes, also the whole creature in general is influenced in various ways at the setting and the going out of the sun.

And runs to her place (*Et ad locum suum anhelans*).

The verb *Schaaph* for which 1) our [Latin] interpreter has badly put *revertitur* 2) means to take breath. Hence it is indicated that the sun, by the exceedingly great impetuosity with which it moves, is, as it were, the cause of all winds and all breath, just as someone, when he runs, sets the air in motion and quickens the breathing. *Anhelare* is thus: to be driven by an exceedingly rapid movement from the east to the west, and from there again to the east, which happens every day and every night.

The fast-moving wind or all-around breeze (*raptatus ventus vel cir-*

1) Instead of: *pro*, in the editions should probably read: *pro Huo*.

2) Erlanger: *overtitur* instead of: *revortitur*.

cumiens spiritus), that is: when the sun returns to the exit, that it rises there, it carries the wind away with it and has the wind in its hand. This is all a verbosity of Solomon, with which he recently wants nothing else than that the sun rises and sets daily, and that the wind is caused by its rapid movement.

V. 7 All the waters flow into the sea, but the sea does not fill up; they flow back to the place where they came from.

Aristotle disputes where the springs and the winds come from, and he is very laborious to investigate this, and with him many others. But nowhere does one find what Solomon says here, that all rivers come from the sea, and in turn fill the sea, placing the sea as the origin and beginning of all waters and rivers, from which they gush and burst forth through hidden passages, while most philosophers assume that in general every river has its origin under the earth, from which it gushes forth. But the opinion of Solomon is true that all bubbles of all springs and rivers flow out of the sea 1) and flow back to it. But these are exceedingly great wonders. First of all in the course and the movement of that tremendously great light, of which has already been said, then in that the rivers pour into the sea and the sea nevertheless does not become fuller. Otherwise, if only the Elbe had flowed from the beginning of the world, it would have been able to fill the whole circle of air, up to the circle of the moon. Now, however, since it has flowed for more than five thousand years, it still remains in its banks and does not overflow.

So he says that everything goes on in its order, and in constant movement one follows the other, as the sun moves without ceasing and never stops. So also the air is always in motion, so also the streams pour without ceasing into the sea, and the sea again into rivers and springs through hidden passages of the earth and veins of the mountains; it becomes as it were destil

leaches and seeps through. "And the earth is a right leach, by which the waters are purified." Thus you see that Solomon has summarized in a few words the wonderful arrangement and movement of the four elements among each other, since he names the earth, the sun, the wind and the waters.

But I believe that Solomon wants this, that he draws us by the image (allegoria) of the change of these things in nature to the thing which he treats, and applies that [image] as it were as a likeness from us, as if he wanted to say: as all these things remain unchangeable (in suis vicibus) 2c., so also all ours. The sun never tires in its ceaseless course, and the waters run into the sea, yet are not exhausted 2c. So it is also with the people. They do not cease to imitate their forefathers, who were vain; as they were vain, so we are vain. No one improves himself by the example of others or becomes more careful by the danger of others. Julius [Caesar] was busy with the most trivial undertakings, Cicero was busy with eloquence, but what was the end of his great effort? The very least, for he did not obtain what he wanted. If he had made use of eloquence, not according to his own ideas, but according to the circumstances and the benefit of the people, he would have been a blessed man. We also follow the examples of those 2c. Therefore, all men's attempts go up and down like this; they go, return, and remain as they have always been. Thus in these words, as I have said, there is not only a description of the realm of vanity, but also a likeness and a picture of the human attempts.

V. 8: Everything is so full of trouble that no one can talk. 2)

This text the sophists have corrupted, thinking that here the studies of the philosophers are punished, by which they investigate the nature and causes of things, as if this were evil and inexplicable. But it

1) Wittenberger and Erlanger: mure instead of: muri.

2) In Latin: Oinnis eansn üittieili" s "t^a noquv HnisHuam sxptionrs vereis potest.

is not evil to investigate the nature and properties of things. Then also the things or things of the world are the most obvious; so much is lacking in them that they should be difficult.

This is the opinion: he wants to speak of human vanity, but these vanities are so many, and they are so great, that he thinks he cannot speak enough of them. It is, he says, not to be talked out how great the vanity of men is, that Persius also exclaims: O how great is the nothingness in the things of the world (o quantum est in rebus inane). And another poet [Horace] says: No one is satisfied with his fate, and no one has learned to remain in the position of life he has been given. 1) Vanity extends too far to be enumerated in all the affairs of men. Therefore, I will say little of vanity when you look at the greatness of it. The vanity is so great that I cannot obtain it by any speech; the thing is too great for those to grasp, or for me to set forth: "It is too great and too much." It is difficult to describe the manifoldness of human desires and aspirations, what Julius desires, what Alexander desires, what Solomon desires, what Cato desires, what Scipio desires, what Pompey desires. For the movements of the heart are too great for words to express. But he proves what he has said with an example.

The eye never sees enough, and the ear never hears enough.

That bites, the man has eyes and senses which do not come to rest. If I were to begin to tell you about the activities of these, everything that we eagerly seek with our eyes or ears, then I would at the same time begin an infinite work. If the eye is never satisfied, how could I attain all the vanity of man with words? In short [Jer. 17:9, Vulg.], "The human heart is evil, and no one can fathom it." So great is the diversity of the inclinations and desires of men, that the eyes are never satisfied to desire one thing and another.

And if they obtain it, the heart is still not satisfied. The heart is an ever yawning maw; it desires everything, and even if it obtained everything, it would still desire more. Look at Alexander the Great. When he ruled over almost the whole world, he sighed when he heard that there were several worlds, and said: "And I have not yet conquered one! Thus his heart clearly desires countless worlds. Who here, however eloquent he might be, could attain by words the exceedingly vain aspirations of this heart? It is this vanity and insatiability of the human heart unspeakable. "What he has, he does not like; what he does not have, he longs for." The words, "The eye never sees its fill," you interpret in a general way, not as those interpreted them: It does not see its fill of heaven.

V. 9-11. What is it that has happened? The very thing that will come to pass hereafter. What is it that has been done? The same thing that will be done again hereafter; and there is nothing new under the sun. Does anything happen of which one would like to say, "Behold, this is new"? For it was also done before in times past, which were before us. It is not remembered how it was before; so also that which is to come after will not be remembered by those who are to come after.

Here again the sophists deceive by understanding this of things themselves, while he clearly indicates that he is speaking of inclinations and desires, since he says: "The eye never sees its fill" 2c. For hearing and seeing are the senses which feel things most, and are moved by things. Therefore, this is the opinion:

What is it that has been? 2c. (Quale est, quod fuit?
etc.)

That is, after you have accomplished what you wanted, your mind does not rest; you are just as minded after you have obtained the thing as when you had not yet obtained the thing. The heart is never satiated. After Alexander has gained the whole world, he has no more than before, because his heart is no longer sated; just as he did nothing before his undertaking, so he does nothing afterwards.

Julius [Caesar] intended to put the state in order, Brutus intended the same, and neither of them accomplished it. This is what he says: "What is it that has been? The very same thing that will happen." 1) That is, always the same mind is there, which is never satiated. What the heart wants, and is anxious to have or to have, is precisely what it already has. In short, "What one has today, he wants more tomorrow." This restless and insatiable desire and vanity of the human heart is thus indicated, which cannot be satisfied by present things, whatever they may be. What I have accomplished today is nothing; even if I have achieved or accomplished something, I am still not satisfied and always want to do other things. This is how all men do it, this is what Julius did, this is what Pompey did, this is what Alexander did. And what those have done, all do; they desire the future, they are weary of the present. Therefore, remember that in these words he is speaking of human activity, not of the things that are to be created or of those that are created, because he is always speaking of what happens under the sun in this kingdom of the world. Therefore it follows:

Nothing new happens under the sun. Does anything happen of which you want to say, "Behold, this is new"?

This passage tormented the sophists very much, because they read in the holy scriptures that many new things have happened. For Christ's birth is new, a virgin mother is something new. Likewise [Isa. 65, 17.], "I will create new heavens and a new earth." And [Revelation 21:5], "I will make all things new." Likewise [Deut. 16:30], "The LORD will make a new thing in the land." 2c. These sayings have caused them to commit great folly here, to rhyme both with each other, what Solomon says here, and what those sayings say. But this happened out of ignorance of Solomon's way of speaking, because they did not pay attention to what he wanted, since he was

says, "Under the sun." For if it is understood from the things themselves and from the works of GOD, it is not true. For GOD always makes new things, but we make nothing new, because the old Adam is the same in all of them; our ancestors abused of things just as we abuse of them. The same attitude that Alexander had, Julius also had, likewise the emperors and all kings, likewise also me. Just as they could not be satisfied, neither can we; they were godless, so are we; we desire to satisfy all the senses, but are unable to do so because the heart is insatiable. Therefore we do nothing new under the sun, there are no new heart movements in man, but we always remain the same, and do not abstain from presumption, even if we are warned by the example of those people. The human heart should be satisfied with the present and stifle the desire for the future; because this does not happen, it is rightly a quite vain vanity. This is why he says: "There is nothing new under the sun", that is, nothing new happens among men, but God makes 2) many new things.

But he says afterwards in this very chapter [v. 16]: "I have more wisdom than all the kings who have been before me", was this not something new? Quite so. But this was a gift of God, therefore very new. But all men have the same aspirations, and you will not find your man who was of a new mind. Others have built, like us; have waged wars, like us. And as those with their striving and efforts did not obtain what they wanted, neither do we; but God, by His works and gifts, creates many and great and ever new things.

One does not remember how it was done before.

That is, people follow their desires, and 3) seek to carry out their aspirations, and are not moved by the examples of the ancestors, that those have done nothing; no one pays attention to that.

1) It seems to us that instead of: ynoū knetum 68t should be read: ^nocl kutnmin 68t. After that we have translated, because so the Latin Bible text reads.

2) Erlanger: keil instead of: kaeit.

3) 6t is missing in the Erlanger.

the undertakings of Alexander and Julius were in vain; Brutus was not moved by the example of Dion, who in an unfortunate manner sought to carry out his plots, to recall Dionysius and to order his commonwealth. This is, as it were, the theme of the whole book about which he wants to speak, namely of human vanity, which undertakes many things and achieves nothing, that is, of the inconstancy and insatiability of the human heart.

I, Ecclesiastes, was king over Israel in Jerusalem, and I set my heart to search wisely all that is done under heaven.

So far, we have heard the general theme, or that of which this book is about, in which he has set himself to deal with the unfortunate efforts and endeavors of men, by which they seek to strengthen and carry out their plots, which God thwarts, since He always resists them. Here he now begins to enumerate peculiar (particularia) things, wanting to conclude by dialectical introduction of individual things (inductione) that general sentence with which he had begun the book, namely: "It is all quite vain" 2c. And this vanity or lamentation is increased by the fact that man, although he sees that the endeavors of former men have come to naught, and that their efforts have been in vain, and that they have labored in vain, still does not allow himself to be instructed. For the flesh is so utterly unintelligent, so utterly blind is reason, that it cannot be corrected by any examples.

However, he starts from himself and sets himself up as an example of vanity. I, he says, have endeavored to order the kingdom wisely and well, but have not accomplished it, even though I was appointed king by God. For it is known that this king was praised and distinguished in the holy scriptures because of his divine wisdom, 1 Kings 3, 11. f. "Because you (says God) have asked these things, and do not ask for long life, nor for riches, 2c., behold, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, that your like shall not be found before you.

and will not arise after you." This is a great testimony to the wisdom of this king, and yet this so wise and understanding king did not accomplish what he wanted. He did not succeed in this endeavor, and rightly so, for God did not give him this wisdom so that he would be able to do everything. GOD did not say: I will give you wisdom which others will hear 2c. Therefore, Solomon had more trouble and work from this wisdom than success. He saw that it was pleasing to God to order the kingdom correctly and to tell the people what was right, but no one followed, neither the princes nor the people.

Therefore, he says, "Since I have not succeeded in my attempts and they have not been obeyed, what will happen to others who are less wise? First of all, he says, I appeal to my experience. I, Preacher, have been king of the Israelites. All the words are emphatic and glorious: I am king, and yet I judge nothing. For who will resist the King who is the Lord of all? Then I am not merely a king, nor over any people, but of the people of God, in whom were many holy men, prophets, teachers of the law 2c. Finally, a king: "in Jerusalem," namely the holy place that God chose to dwell there. Now, if such a powerful, free, wise king, who has the most holy people, in the most holy city, where GOD is present and GOD's Word is present, nevertheless cannot carry out his good and holy counsels, what shall we say of others?

V.13. And I set my heart to seek and search wisely all that is done under heaven.

Again, one has to stay with what Solomon is talking about. He does not speak of the deeds of God, which are not limited under the sun, but are everywhere, but of those that go on and are done by men under heaven, which is the place and kingdom assigned to us. For the works of GOD are above and under heaven and everywhere. They are therefore the works which we do according to our own counsel and according to our own strength, of which He says: "I have given my

heart to arrange everything in the best way, so that I would have a kingdom that would be provided with the best order; but only so much was arranged as God worked. In the rest, where God did not lay His hand, I stopped to work my plots, to apply my wisdom and efforts, so that everything would be taken care of in the right way, but in vain. For I have done nothing but miserably toiled and martyred myself, as follows:

God has given such unfortunate trouble to the children of men that they have to torture themselves inside.

That means: God gave me this thought as a punishment, so that I would finally learn that I should not trust in my wisdom, and that everything is in vain, no matter how wisely it is attacked, if God does not want it. I could not stand it when there was some mistake or some error 2c. Therefore, it was quite right for me to be tormented by this thought, so that it would instruct me to turn everything over to His will, and I would realize that my wisdom was nothing. But it is an unfortunate trouble, because we do not want to give way to divine wisdom, and want to be wiser, and do not suffer what God's wisdom suffers, and do not surrender to his will.

By the way, the remembrance and research itself, by which we would like to be advised to the community, is not only not evil, but also godly. This is certainly a good man who wishes that the whole world would be helped. He who is so minded and speaks to himself: If only God would that this city and the prince would keep themselves right, he does not think evil and does not have an evil disposition. For to be concerned that the commonwealth be ordered and preserved is certainly a very good virtue and the highest virtue among men. This very good research, I say, by which I wanted to advise the community, was vain, had no success, but brought me grief. Cicero, Demosthenes, very wise men, wanted to help the commonwealth to the best welfare, and nevertheless only entangled it more in all evil. Thus, God destroyed the wisdom of these people. Thus

This book condemns the sorrow and concern to help things with our own counsel and wisdom, whether they be public or private matters.

Look at Adam, Abraham, Isaac and all the holy fathers, as soon as they started to rely on their own suggestions, without the word of God, immediately everything went back, "and came to nothing". For if God does not precede men with His word, they do no good. Without God's action and word we can do nothing, even if we begin. Thus Eve and Adam were wrong when they said when Cain was born [Gen. 4:1], "I have the man, the Lord," because it was a human thought without the Word, they had the glorious hope that this one would be the seed. He will be raised and appointed heir of the whole world. But soon Cain killed his brother; then all their remembrance fell away and became vain. Thus Isaac lacks his firstborn, Esau. Saul is vainly anxious to deliver his kingdom to his sons. So also David, since he preferred Absalom. Thus God scoffs at thoughts and counsels that are not based on His word, and rightly so. For why do we want to dictate to him and add to his wisdom?

Therefore, we should learn to submit to God's counsels and abstain from worries and thoughts that God has not commanded. There is nothing more certain, and nothing more pleasing to God, than if we abstain from our counsels and base ourselves on His word; there we will find enough to do. He has commanded us faith, love and the cross. With these, I say, we can happily occupy ourselves; the rest we shall do as it comes before our hands, and leave to him the care of success. But now, because we despise His word, God punishes us again so that we struggle in vain. For God resists that which is not done, neither good nor evil, which the wise and the rulers think of by setting aside the word, as it says in the 33rd Psalm, v. 10: "The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to naught."

Therefore, where there is the most apparent wisdom and the most diligent activity, God makes the most mei-

This is obviously happening in our times, when the princes and bishops of Germany have achieved nothing through so many imperial diets and so many councils. But even so, God cannot bring us to submit our counsels to Him. Therefore it is called an unholy toil, that is, one that torments and tortures (not that these things, wisdom, counsel 2c., böfe 1), according to the ordinary way of speaking in Scripture, as Matt. 6:34: "It is enough for every day to have its own plague." But this plague or trouble God gave to men, not to destroy them, but to dissuade them from their foolish wisdom and counsels, and to instruct us that our wisdom is nothing. Cicero has indeed written many wise things, but when we read them and undertake to put them into practice, everything goes the way of cancer and nothing is accomplished, because we attack them according to our advice. For even the right wisdom does not bring anything about, but the will of God, so that we learn to pray: "Your will be done" 2c.

V. 14. 15. I looked at all the doings under the sun, and behold, they were all vain and pitiful. Crookedness cannot be made bad, nor can error be counted.

This is a confirmation of the previous statement. Not only have I experienced this vanity in my own example, but I have also looked at all others, and have recognized that their counsels have failed as well as mine; just as my own counsels do not work out well for me, so I have seen that they do not work out well for anyone in the whole world. The counsels of the wise are equally thwarted as those of the foolish. Therefore, with these words the attitude is rejected which is called "the good opinion," as it is commonly said, "I have meant well." But nothing is a good opinion except that which is governed by the Word of God, and which begins from faith; all other opinions, even those which are contrary to the

The best ideas, which seem to be very good, are deceptive and do a great deal of harm. This is also testified by Cicero, who himself experienced that the best thought out turns out to be the worst. And God is quite right when he thus thwarts our counsels, because even if only a few succeed, people soon become puffed up and arrogate honor to themselves, which is against the honor of God, who alone wants to be honored 2c.

The crooked cannot go bad, nor the wrong be counted.

He adds the reason why everything causes misery through vain care and sorrow. For, he says, the faults are innumerable, which cannot be remedied, whose greatness and quantity defeat all human counsel. Therefore he wants to say: I know by my wisdom what is useful and suitable, but what can I do against these things? The crookedness and corruption in human affairs are so great that they can never be set right. Look at the Roman Empire; although it was ruled wisely, it could never find nor bring about a lasting peace through its counsels, but in the place of one defeated enemy, many took its place, and if there were not external wars, internal unrest arose until the state perished. This is what has happened to all men; let every man look at the course of his life, and if at any time in his life everything has turned out as he had imagined, let him accuse this book of falsehood.

Therefore, the best thing would be to put everything in GOtte's home and follow those who say: "Let it go the way it goes, there is no other way, deun it goes. This also reminds the German saying: "You are much too geel around the beak that you should make old peelers pious". Therefore you see that princes who want to reform and correct everything in the best possible way often do a lot of harm. In human affairs it is not possible to act so well that everything is done in the right way, and not very many evils remain. Therefore, the right thing to do is to walk in the faith that allows God to rule and pray that

1) In the original edition: mal", that is inalue, related from res; so also the Jena. Wittenberg and Erlangen: maln.

The kingdom of God comes, meanwhile tolerating and suffering all evil, but commanding it to Him who judges rightly, as Christ did not trust Himself to men [John 2:24], but bore all men's infirmities and evils. When it was announced to him that John the Baptist had been killed, he kept silent about this horrible deed, went into the wilderness [Matth. 14, 13], gave food to the people, "did not accept it"; he preached the word alone and carried out his ministry. So it is the right Christian wisdom that one should submit to the government of God and entrust the matter to the one who judges rightly. A Christian can punish sin with God's word, but he should not intervene with his hand if he has not been forced to do so by God, or if he has been commanded to do so by the word. Therefore, if you are alone and cannot make everything right and straight, command Him who has more power and who alone is able to do everything.

V. 16-18. I said in my heart, Behold, I am become glorious, and have more wisdom than all that were before me in Jerusalem; and my heart hath learned and experienced many things. And my heart also gave out that I learned wisdom, and foolishness, and prudence sapientiam et scientiam, et stultitiam, et imprudentiam). But I became aware that this is also effort. For where there is much wisdom, there is much sorrow; and he who must teach much must suffer much.

It is almost the same as what he said above. I, he says, have often thought how it is that my undertakings and counsels do not succeed, since I have become glorious and have more wisdom than all 2c. For besides the divine wisdom with which he was endowed by God, he also shone forth with an admirable human or worldly wisdom, so much so that even the order of his servants was an object of wonder to the queen of Arabia [2 Chron. 9:4].

Wisdom and prudence.

"Prudence" (scientia) does not generally denote a speculative knowledge, but a practical and experiential knowledge, a right conduct (discretionem) in the execution of things, which we call experience and practice in things, as it is said in the 119th Psalm [v. 66.]: "Teach me sound manners and knowledge" (scientiam). "Wisdom" is the knowledge by which I see how a community must be ordered and governed, which prudence or experience then directs according to the existing things and circumstances, according to a certain manner, as the things and the times entail 2c.

Thoroughness and lack of understanding.

Namely, so that I would keep these away from me and my kingdom, but promote those [wisdom and prudence]. But what happens? I have learned that this, too, is tribulation of the spirit and useless worry, which does not achieve its purpose. Therefore, the wisest thing is to compose oneself in such a way that one can bear everything. Why?

For where there is much wisdom, there is much grief.

"He who sees much and knows how it should go" cannot avoid being annoyed and thinks: "Oh, how hopelessly, how shamefully it goes on" in the world! 2) But where does this anger and indignation come from other than from much wisdom? For he who knows much has many causes to be angry, since he must see many annoying things every day. He who has closed eyes knows nothing and is not indignant. Therefore learn to be silent, command the government and pray: Lord, your will be done. Otherwise you will wear out your heart and your body, and spoil the time and your life.

1) In the Erlanger inoderstur instead of rnodsratur.

2) The words in speech marks in this sentence are in the original German language.

The second chapter.

V. 1 I said in my heart, "Well, I will live well and have good days. But behold, that was also vain.

In the previous chapter, he showed that the worries and troubles and suggestions of men, especially those with which we want to help men, are vain and nothing, and taught that we should be content with the word and work of God, so that we do not presume on anything unless the word of God prescribes it or his work compels it, which often seems to be contrary to the word, as when he oppresses us with some calamity, even if we have acted rightly according to his word. In this, faith and patience are necessary, so that we do not carry out our advice and try to escape those sufferings, but command ourselves to him and suffer the hand of God in his work. Now he turns to the other side:

I said in my heart, Well, I will live well 2c.

As if he wanted to say: Since it is of no use to be anxious and to have one's own plans, I will renounce them and turn to the right and choose a calmer life. I want to get myself a room and a quiet life, I want to enjoy good things, I want to let everything go as it goes and as I want. I want to live a life of pleasure. But even this was vain and did not go out better than before the counsel of wisdom and human care, for God resists even here. For a tranquil life is not granted in any other way than from the words and works of God, and experience itself teaches this. In the East, banquets are arranged to bring joy, special foods and games are devised to cheer up the guests, but mostly the opposite happens, "and it seldom becomes a good collation. For either there are quite a few sad and serious faces, or something disturbs everything, especially where there are so many discussions and precautions.

meets for the future joy. Often, however, it happens that someone comes by chance, that is, that God gives it so, to an exceedingly joyful banquet. This is also the case in other things.

Some people seek pleasure in *amore*, but soon they taste bitterness, about which St. Augustine complains in the books of his Confessions that he was miserably afflicted in the midst of *amore*. Thus, when we have good days, they are soon filled with bitterness. There is nothing better, therefore, than to be in the word and work of God, and to send the heart so that it may be calm and content with the present things. If the Lord has given a wife, you should keep her (*habenda est in praesenti*) and enjoy her; but if you want to go beyond these limits and increase this present gift, instead of joy you will be given sadness and grief. Therefore, we should simply keep to what the Lord wills and gives. If you want to be happy and enjoy yourself, expect it from him. Therefore, as he offers it to you, take it and be joyful with the joyful, and do not let it happen to you that you want to be wise and serious among the joyful, as the wretched saints (*sanctuli*) do, who disturb the joy of others, which God gives. Only realize that all this is given to you by God, and that you receive it from His hand and use it as His gift.

In short, we are not to enjoy our happiness, goods, counsel, or any other thing, but as God has given it, so shall we use it. "Mau let GOD rule." It is not for us to prescribe place, person and manner, otherwise we will be deceived. Therefore, cheerfulness is not condemned as evil or vain, but human effort and human advice are rejected if we want to prepare cheerfulness for ourselves or make an effort to do so, without taking into account the will of God.

but as both come from God, so we should use them. Just as it is a sin if we cause ourselves distress and sadness through our advice, so it is also a sin if we do not want to suffer it when God gives it to us. So it is also reprehensible if we want to flee happiness and not accept it when God gives it, as those miserable false saints do, who see sour, 1) that is, seek a place, time and person for sadness and prescribe strict rules, which is found among hypocrites and is vain. They want us to weep with those who weep, but they themselves do not want to rejoice with the joyful. Sadness, gladness, and all these things, whether they be outward or inward, need not be measured by place, time 2c., but as they come from the GOtte wholly free, so let them be used wholly free. Hence he says:

I said in my heart, Well, I will live well 2c.

That is, I wanted to measure the thing according to measure and rule, but that was nothing but vanity. Here again it must be remembered that we do not stray with Jerome from the actual subject (thematē), who foolishly boasts that he learned from this book to despise the world and all things. These were followed by the monks and the sophists, who do not know what it means to flee the world, indeed, do not know what the world is. For that is, in truth, to teach that one despises the good creatures of God, and to forbid their use, contrary to the revealed words of sacred Scripture.

Therefore, it is not called fleeing the world, if one keeps away from things, but if one abstains from one's own attempts. Thus Jerome would have taught his Blesilla rightly: "Do not despise things, but despise your pretensions, your attachments, your inclinations and your worries, by which you try to bring about everything by your own strength (tuo Marte). Honor and desire for things is not evil, but anxious care for things and your counsels must be despised. Also that

1) exterminant, vultus 8UN8-which has its natural face expression.

is not to despise the world, to clothe oneself with filth, to wear out one's flesh by watching, to hurt oneself by fasting 2c., but to use these things as they come. If the Lord gives you food, eat; if he gives you fasting, suffer it; if he gives you positions of honor, accept them; if he gives you harm, suffer it; if he throws you into prison, endure it; if he wants you to be king, follow the one who calls you; if he pushes you off the throne, do not worry about it, just as David ruled the kingdom with equanimity and bore the banishment as a right despiser of the world. So these are the right despisers of the world, who receive everything "as God sends it to them," and use all things with thanksgiving when they are there, and gladly lack them when the Lord takes them away.

V. 2. I said to the laughter: You are great; and to joy: What are you doing?

Understand all of the advice. He wants to say: 2) I wanted to seek good things deliberately (arte), to strive for pleasure and happiness, but this thought was nothing but nonsense, which plagued me in a twofold way, firstly because the effort of thinking and seeking tortures the heart. Afterwards, when I hope that I have reached it, some twist or difficulty soon intervenes, so that I lose both the effort and the joy. This is it that he says: The laughter, namely, which I seek, and the joy, which I strive to put into effect, of what use is it to me? For it is never granted to me; there is always something difficult. The best joy and comfort, therefore, is not that which one seeks, but that which is offered unawares by God, without your care and counsel. Thus, outward happiness is good, but only for those who make good use of it. The wicked, however, even though they revel in good living, are not truly pleased, because they do not realize that these are gifts from God, and they soon grow weary and seek other things, and are not satisfied with anything that is available.

2) Erlanger: „0. ü.“ instead of: "V. ä.], da- is, vult. üiesrs.

V.3 Then thought I in mine heart to draw my body from wine, and to draw my heart unto wisdom, that I might lay hold on that which is foolishness, until I should learn what is good for men to do, as long as they live under heaven.

Here, for the third time, he sets up another one in order to try whether this might succeed. Since I, who live in the world and among men, neither the anxious worries with which I toil in order to advise others, nor even the good days succeed, but are void, I want to begin a hard and strict life, so that I want to completely abstain [from the good life] and lead a hard life 2c. But I must wonder that those false despisers of the world and the creatures have not paid attention to this saying of Solomon, in which he calls a hard way of life and relentless severity vanity. Here he condemns the strictest rules (observationes) of the monks, especially of the Carthusians, about whom the world is astonished and considers them godly and holy beings. And this saying is, as it were, a thunderclap against all the rules and all the false spirituality of the monks, by which they subject things that are not their own to themselves and their counsels. [I say this not as if abstinence were evil, but that one seeks it on one's own counsel, and that one commits oneself to such things as if they were necessary. For time, things, place 2c. are divine gifts, which they nevertheless want to capture by their rules and regulations. For the rest, they have nothing from it but pain and sorrow, in that they torment the flesh and torture themselves in vain. For the Carthusians make such a rule: one may not eat meat even if one would die of hunger. And this is the very worst, that they seek holiness in such things, as if the devil himself could not also be holy in such a way, because he also does not drink wine, nor does he clothe himself with purple 2c.

Therefore he says, "It would be good for me to abstain, or to eat and drink, but it will be exceedingly bad if I do my counsel. God has no

He has made regulations about place, time, food and fasting (abstinentiam), and we fools prescribe: now I may eat meat food, now I may not eat it. But he himself says: if you have, eat; if you have not, fast. Therefore, if you want to abstain, wait for the Lord's counsel; for he can have you thrown into prison, into famine, into sickness, 2c. then abstain, then you have a rule prescribed for you, not by yourself, but by God Himself. But now you invent a way of abstaining from God out of your own advice. And these excellent despisers of the world abstain from things in such a way that they do not lack anything: they do it in such a way that they do not have to fast. Summa, as they exalt themselves above God by their own righteousness, so they exalt themselves above the creatures by their statutes.

And to draw my heart to wisdom.

That is: I wanted to govern myself wisely according to my advice, and to be wise in abstinence, so that I would grasp what wisdom (or foolishness) is. For the Hebrew expression is ambiguous, sometimes denoting wisdom, sometimes foolishness, but generally meaning foolishness, so that the sense is, "that I might grasp what is foolishness," namely, that I might know how to remind others of what is foolish or what is wise. "That I may take hold," I say, so that it may be avoided, because this is a part of wisdom, that one may not only know what is good, but also avoid what is evil.

But he counts almost the whole register of his works, which he has undertaken to teach others: I have begun to try very many things. While I was busy with it, I abstained from wine and from good living; by working and building I sought experience and wisdom 2c. in order to teach others, so that others might live rightly after my example and abstain (abstain) wisely, and rule their households rightly. For he speaks of human and worldly wisdom, not of divine or spiritual, by which we discern things that are against (erga) GOD. Therefore, I began to build, to plant vineyards, lacking no effort and diligence 2c.

But I have gained nothing but vanity from all this work, because I wanted to govern myself according to my advice.

But to want to govern oneself according to his advice is vain; indeed, he who wants to govern himself according to his advice troubles himself with a twofold adversity: first, he torments himself with his advice; second, he accomplishes nothing, or if he achieves something, suffering intervenes and destroys it. Thus Nero builds a splendid and royal house, but does not enjoy it. For this is how it generally happens that one builds, but another comes into possession and enjoys what has been built, and as it is said in the parable of the Gospel [John 4:37]: "This one sows, the other cuts." Thus our blessed Prince Frederick built many things, but now others own them. He had the future in mind, was not satisfied with the present; when one thing was built, he soon sought another. The prince who is now here 1) does not enjoy what has been built, but builds other things, fortifies cities, and does it quite differently. The successor of this one will also again enjoy a completely different way.

This is, therefore, in truth, a great vanity and misery, that one is troubled with sorrow and distress at the work itself until it is completed, but when it is completed, dies or falls ill, or is deprived of its use and benefit by some other hindrance; but also that he who succeeds often does not use what has been completed, or even destroys it. Such is the nature of the whole louse of human life. God always argues against human suggestions, and again, we against the counsel of God. But it is easy for Him to destroy all that we have begun; indeed, so great is the vanity of the heart that it never remains the same, nor can it be so constant that it stops at what is present and finds rest in it. After a person has undertaken and accomplished something, the desire to do something remains; there is weariness with what has been accomplished, and something else is sought, as he also said above.

1) Marginal gloss: Elector John.

[Cap. 1, 9.] "What is it that has happened?" 2c. Thus the human heart is of the same nature after a thing is made as it was before the thing was made; everywhere inconstant and full of restlessness. If a man has one florin, he looks out for ten and desires the same; if he has ten, he desires a hundred; if he has a hundred, he desires a thousand 2c. If a prince has one castle, which is well built, he wants to have two; he who has one kingdom also strives for a second. Summa: Alexander desires many worlds.

It is the same in the home, in marriage and in the upbringing of children. You intend to take a wife who is well-behaved, chaste, pleasing, a good housemother, but it can happen that you are given a wife who has completely contrary morals and is very bad, or that you find a lot wrong with her, even if she is very good. You are anxious to raise your children in such a way that they become righteous and useful to the community, but, contrary to expectation, they may become murderers or otherwise bad boys and a useless burden for the earth. Shall one then give up the house and the care for the household? For I see that nothing succeeds to my diligence nor any success corresponds to my efforts? No. What should one do then? One should rule the house, keep the servants in order, educate the children, rule the wife, but in such a way that this is done without your measure and rule, that you do not trust in your wisdom. If your son is fit for the study of science, let him study it; if he is fit for a trade, let him learn it. Only do not go beyond your limits, but consider all success and achievement, otherwise you will have the two difficulties mentioned above [Col. 1408]. Now from this it will be easily understood what follows:

I did great things; I built houses, planted vineyards; I made me gardens and pleasure gardens, and planted in them all kinds of fruitful trees; I made me pools to water the forest of green trees. I had menservants and maidservants, and servants: I had a greater substance of cattle and flocks, than

I also gathered me silver and gold, and treasure of kings and countries; I made me singers, and singers, and pleasers of men, and all manner of music; and I increased above all that were before me at Jerusalem; wisdom also abode with me; and all that mine eyes desired I left them, and withheld no joy from my heart, that it should rejoice in all my labor; and this I counted my portion of all my labor. But when I looked at all my works that my hand had done, and the toil that I had taken, behold, it was all vain and pitiful, and there was nothing more under the sun.

Here, as I have said, Solomon enumerates the register of his works that he had done to obtain joy and prosperity and to rule his household rightly. But this is easy from what has been said before.

I that great things.

What our Latin interpreter expressed by magnificavi is, I have done glorious and great works, of which you read 1 Kings 3 and 7 2c. But what fruit have I had from them? None; nothing but trouble, others have had the fruit and the benefit.

Paradisos or gardens of pleasure. The Hebrew word means "pleasure gardens, as one makes beautiful spice gardens of flowers and the noblest spices". Vernaculos ["servants"], meaning. Servants born in the house. For the children of servants born in the house 1) were called vernaculi 2) and were forever servants to the lord whose servant was their father, whether he had come into servitude by purchase or by any other cause.

I had servants and maids.

That is, I was an excellent steward and family man, I wanted to rule my household according to my advice. I have collected money and goods (substantiam) or treasure (gazam). Everything (he says) that is always found in other regions in the form of jewels and precious things.

1) Erlanger: ctominMi instead of: ãonii nati.

2) Thus the Wittenbergers. The Jenaers and the Erlangers: vornac^ula.

I have brought together all these things for the splendor of the kingdom, as great and rich kings are wont to do.

I created for myself singers and singers, and well-wishers of the people 2c.

Here the grammarians argue about what is shidda and shiddoth. I have rendered it by: "dancer and dancer", but I do not like that. In the meantime, I follow those who think that they are musical instruments, because of the preceding, where he writes thus: "I created for myself singers and singers and pleasures or pleasures of the children of men", namely musical instruments. But he doubles the word XXXXX XXX, because perhaps he wants the unison

of the same with each other and the alternation in the music has wanted to indicate.

I took to 2c.

That is, all this was made and set up in the most suitable way. Further:

Wisdom also stayed with me.

He understands by wisdom not the speculative wisdom, but the one that serves to govern life and all affairs, where also the divine wisdom is included. For he confesses that he not only had an abundance of all things, but at the same time he also had the wisdom to manage, direct and govern all this, which is an exceedingly great gift of God. But he did not succeed, because he wanted everything to go out according to his advice, which he had wisely ordered 2c., while all men on earth have this word in their mouth: "It does not go right", because they see that many things are wisely decided and ordered, and yet have no progress 2c. It is therefore a great piece of wisdom that one should know this, that success does not follow otherwise than in its time, and that things are governed neither by the counsel of the wise nor by the foolishness of fools.

Everything my eyes desired, I let them have 2c.

That is to say: I have stooped even further, and wanted to give all of the goods that I be-

I wanted to enjoy the pleasures I had ridden, but I was not allowed to. I wanted this to be my part in life, but God does not suffer me to govern these pleasures by my counsel; He has always resisted me with more obstacles. When I wanted to enjoy my pleasures, my gardens, the affairs of the realm drew me away from them; I had to administer justice, settle and arbitrate disputes 2c. Thus I have not been able to govern the pleasure according to my advice. The same happens to our princes that when they intend to enjoy themselves, a sad matter intervenes, 1) which disturbs the joy, and fills it with grief. This is how God always acts, preventing our counsels and prescribed rules. He gives enough for custom and joy, but at the same time He wants us to have His goods pure and clean and to preserve them in their freedom.

Behold, it was all vain and wretched.

Is it not an exceedingly great vanity that a king, who has so many riches and so great an abundance of all things, cannot enjoy even one thing out of so innumerable according to his advice? And if he enjoys some, he enjoys them in flight (raptim). So completely we cannot govern and direct or seize things according to our advice. So let each one enjoy freely the present things as God has given them; let them be given or taken away, let them come and go according to God's will. "If it is good," he thinks, "it may well become evil," and again; only that he does not surrender to lusts and let himself be immersed in them, as the wicked do 2c.

And nothing more under the sun.

From his advice he has nothing but grief and sorrow. Things are good, but our presumption is vain, since we prescribe rules for them or the way to use them, while they cannot be put into rules by us.

V.12-14. Then I turned to see wisdom, and prudence, and foolishness. For

1) Erlanger: indioat statbc ineidat.

Who knows what kind of man he will become after the king they have already made ready? Then I saw that wisdom surpassed foolishness as light surpasses darkness, that the wise man's eyes are in his head, but fools walk in darkness, and yet I realized that one is like the other.

Another experience proves that everything is vain, namely human efforts and advice. As (he says) it happened to me, so, I have seen, it happens to other people. My advice and even my wisdom was vain and futile, and did not have the success I wanted. I have seen the same thing in other people. I looked at other people's wisdom and foolishness and compared them with each other. I saw that some behaved very wisely and undertook many clever things. I have also seen bold fools who acted without good counsel, whose boldness and foolishness nevertheless sometimes went out happily and succeeded, while the counsel of the wise was entirely in vain, and the wise people themselves were exceedingly unfortunate, so that this bold action has brought about the proverb: Fortune helps the bold.

Cicero and Demosthenes were very wise people, who ordered the commonwealths excellently, prescribed laws and also thought that it would happen that success and success would correspond to their doing, but it turned out quite differently, so much so that one of them [Cicero] exclaims about himself: O miserable man, who was never wise, and yet without reason was once taken for what I was not; how much, O Roman people, has your opinion of me deceived you! 2c. The other, however, bent by old age and broken by hardships, said that he would rather die than take up the office of government again, for he too had experienced that things are not guided by the advice of wise people, even if they are good. In contrast, the emperors Julius and Octavius, who did not always follow wisdom but often boldly followed their advice, were much happier.

st Instead of ernt in the issues is read. Cf.

6X6A. oxp- XX, p. 68.) Walch, St. Louis AuSg., vol. I V, 1933.

being. Philip of Macedonia acted against the advice of Demosthenes and also had more luck than sense.

The advice was certainly good, but to insist on it in such a way that one derives a certain success from it is vain. For things do not want to be grasped by human advice. Summa, a thing is not accomplished by the wisdom of the wise, nor by the presumption of the foolish, so that the counsel of the wise is made foolishness, lest we boast on our own account. Thus, even in war, victory is not immediately achieved, no matter how well the army is equipped and everything is wisely thought out, as in earlier years the Frenchman hoped for a certain victory over the emperor, but the opposite happened. 1)

So he says: You see that the foolish succeed as well as the wise, so that there seems to be no difference between a wise man and a foolish man as far as success is concerned, yes, that it seems as if there is no God, since he lets things be done so by chance (temere). But Solomon answers: No; but wisdom exceeds foolishness exceedingly. It is true that human wisdom cannot direct things, but God Himself directs them. God can direct what He wills through His wisdom, but man does not direct it. For God not only has the wisdom, but also the power to direct, so that what He has commanded may succeed; this man cannot do. In short, God's counsel does not fail, but the counsels of men or wise men fail. Therefore, he rightly says:

Then I saw that wisdom surpassed foolishness, as light surpassed darkness.

Wisdom is good, but still, because it lacks the powers, it cannot carry out things and the outcome is not in its power.

The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fools 2c.

1) King Francis of France was defeated and captured by Emperor Carl V at the Battle of Pavia in 1525.

I see that the same thing happens to both. Wisdom is missing, and presumption is missing; nevertheless, wisdom surpasses foolishness. To have eyes in the head is a Hebrew way of speaking; we express this in German and in Proverbs thus: "He who wants to play at chess should not put his eyes in bags," by which we indicate that he must not only be knowledgeable about this game, but also a careful and diligent player. Thus he also says here: "The wise man's eyes are in his head," that is, they are not only prudent managers of affairs, but also prudent, careful, and mindful of things. And they see how things must be governed, but they cannot bring about success. The fool, however, has no eyes in his head, because he lets himself be led by presumption and audacity. Incidentally, on both sides the matter is governed by chance and luck (that is, by God directing how it goes out), and neither by our counsel nor by our presumption. At times both fall, at times they succeed, but God does not want rules to be made of them. For the creatures are not in our hands, but in the hands of God, who indeed gives us their use and does through us what he wills; but that we add to this, and want to govern this use by our counsel and our undertakings, is in vain. He thus instructs us not to trust in our wisdom and counsel, but to do what comes before the hand; if it does not turn out well, we should command God.

For what man can imitate the king who made him before? (Quis enim homo potest imitari regem, qui eum ante fecit?) 2)

2) Here the interpretation goes back again to the words in the 12th verse, which Luther translated later in our Bible like this: "For who knows what kind of man he will become after your king, whom they have already made ready", which have not been explained above. Luther follows here still in whole the version of the Vulgate. In the same v. 12. these words are in parenthesis: <zuiü ^st, inouam, vomo, ut sky ni possit rogen 1'notorLM suum? swhat is, I say, man, that he could follow the king, his creator?^

Here he describes GOtt in a beautiful and appropriate paraphrase, as if to say: GOD is our King. He not only made us, but also governs us constantly, so that everything will turn out for us according to His will. He alone reaches from the beginning to the end and his counsel and will cannot be hindered by anyone. Therefore, Solomon preferred to call him "the king" rather than God. Some have wisdom, others boldness, but no one can imitate his king, no one can do what he does. For what he prescribes comes to pass; his will and counsel prosper.

And: "He made us before", namely before we were. A similar expression is in Paul [Rom. 11, 35.]: "Who hath given him aught before, that it should be recompensed him?" Therefore, as this king commands and rules, so all things go forth. By this he therefore indicates that our counsels are nothing, because we are made; we are not the king. God does not want us and His creatures to be ruled by us, but on the contrary, God wants to rule, otherwise we would be kings of God. Nothing is accomplished by our wisdom or boldness without many falling into misfortune by their presumption, but even more by their wisdom, as also some of the very wisest, Diou, Cicero, Brutus, Demosthenes 2c. For God nullifies the counsel and nobility of men and mocks them, so that He may inspire us everywhere to fear Him, that we may learn to leave it to Him to lay down the laws for the government, and not to dictate to Him.

And yet realized that one is like the other.

That is to say: I have seen that both had the same fate, that as the wise man achieves nothing, so also the presumptuous man achieves nothing, that a thing can be accomplished neither by audacity nor by wisdom, even if God allows it to happen in both ways; but it does not become a rule from it. For if our counsel were to apply, it would always go out well; if audacity were to hinder, it would never have to succeed. Marius, Antony and other people of this kind have achieved more by their audacity.

than Cicero would have done by his wisdom. And nowhere can one see the examples of human presumption and wisdom better than among the Romans and the pagans. For among the Jews, the wars were mostly waged by the command of the prophets and according to the word of God.

V. 15 Then I thought in my heart, "Because the fool is like me, why did I stand for wisdom? Then I thought in my heart that such things are also vain.

This, too, is intended to make us refrain from relying on our advice. I, he says, have governed my kingdom most wisely, and yet I have not succeeded as I wished. On the other hand, I had a governor (praefectum) who did not rule wisely, but who nevertheless managed everything well. Since I now see that the fools generally have just as good or better success, why have I stood by wisdom? That is, why do I trust in my advice and wisdom by adding heartache to my work?

Then I thought in my heart that this was also vain.

Through experience I have learned that one must trust neither in counsel nor in boldness. For it is shown above [v. 13] that wisdom surpasses foolishness, even though things are not done either by foolishness or by wisdom. Therefore we must take the middle road and command things to the King who made us. If he offers an opportunity, we should use it; if he gives, we should accept it; if he takes, we should suffer it 2c. What thou canst do, do; what thou canst not, leave. "What thou canst not lift, leave." Thus wisdom avails, if I do that which I know pleases God, and command him what he will have done by you. If we do this, only then would we be truly wise.

V. 16 For the wise are not remembered for ever, no more than the fool; and the days to come forget all.

1) SUN is missing in the Erlanger.

Both what the wise man has done and ordered according to his advice, and what the fool has done in his presumption, may it be well or badly, will be consigned to oblivion. For neither they themselves, nor others, will be bettered by the fact that they have given everything to God, but their descendants will follow their advice and will not be satisfied with the orders (ordinationibus) of their ancestors, but will seek something new. What they have, they are tired of, what they do not have, they seek. In such a way we dream: If it succeeded before, it will succeed again; if it did not succeed, it will succeed now. We want to do it more wisely than those 2c.

Look at the Roman state, how the consuls and the emperors have always revoked what the former had done; they were tired of the present and the past and looked forward to the future. What is the use of worrying with many worries, as if the descendants would approve of yours or be of the same mind? It will not happen, because what you have is spurned as useless 2c. Therefore it is impossible that things or orders should be held in the same esteem by the descendants as by the ancestors.

Lycurgus thought that he had given the Lacedemonians laws to keep until he returned, that is, forever. With this intention he left, never to return, hoping that in this way his laws would become perpetual. But he did not accomplish anything.

Augustus said that he had laid such foundations for the state that he hoped it would last forever; but his descendants soon overthrew everything. The Roman people wished for the death of Nero and thought that they would get a better government, but after that the state was not much better. Solomon ruled the kingdom in such a way that one could hope it would remain stable, but immediately after his death it was divided. For Rehoboam, who succeeded Solomon, was not satisfied with the wise government of his father, ruined everything and the kingdom was divided into two parts.

And this does not happen merely in external

But also in religion and the word of God, where the descendants, neglecting the purity of the teaching handed down to them by the fathers, always seek something new, just as those do who, now that the gospel has come to light again, are not satisfied with the purity of the faith or with the teaching of the gospel, make new disputations about the sacraments. When this false teaching has taken root, new sects will arise without end. For the flesh cannot be satisfied with the one, simple and true doctrine.

But understand that Solomon does not speak of the persons, but of what the people do, whether they are wise men or fools, that this is neglected. The memory of the people remains in the books, but not in the institution of the community, and their deeds are recorded in the history books, but no one pays attention to them and cares about them; and the descendants are not moved by the examples of the ancestors, but always take up something new. What is there, one does not like; what is not there, one seeks, and yet it is nothing new. For if it is there, it is already old, it does not please; another is sought. In short, to be satisfied with the present is a gift of the Holy Spirit, but it is impossible for the flesh, which is always inclined from present things to future ones, and while it pursues these, it loses them, and deprives itself of the use of both. The miser lacks both what he has and what he does not have. But what happens to the miser in the case of money, happens to the whole human race in the case of pleasures and counsels 2c., that is, they have nothing, although they have everything. Alexander the Great can serve as an example of this, for his heart was not satisfied after he had conquered all of Asia. If this is true in external things, what wonder is it that this happens with the gospel? What we already have, we do not have, because we are not moved in heart by it, but something

Want something else. Christians, on the other hand, have everything, even if they have nothing.

And as the wise man dies, so does the fool.

A similar saying is Ps. 49:11: "For it is seen that the wise die, as well as fools and fools perish, and must leave their goods to others." But this is also to be understood of what they do. The wise man dies with what he has accomplished, as does the fool. One does not take into account what good they have done. And even if you have done everything to the best of your ability, you will receive the reward of being disgusted with all that you have done, or you will even be punished with banishment, with death 2c. Yes, many also despise you and destroy you.

V. 17. Therefore I was displeased to live, because I was displeased with what is done under the sun, that it is so vain and troublesome.

That is, I disliked everything that happened under the sun, because it was nothing but vain work and caused vain trouble. Not as if Solomon wishes for death, but because he considers it a misery and a pity that he has to deal with these things. He wants to say, "I was tired and weary of it." For who can suffer that he should have nothing but trouble in the doing of a thing, and nothing but contempt of that which he has wrought or done? "To live," or life, according to the idiom of Scripture, means to live well, "to live in ease." Ps. 22:30: "And they that let not their souls live," 1) that is, whose souls were not in well-doing, "who live evil and hard-suffering," as the poor, oppressed, and otherwise destined to death and miserable. Of these it is said in Scripture that they do not live. Therefore, he does not say that he desires death, but dislikes the way of life, which by human counsel causes trouble and distress.

So Solomon wants us to remain constantly ready for death and for life, and seeks to bring us back to the use of the present things, that we may live with the-

1) tÅ kniirtLM kuarn Hori viviüeLkLnt,. This is also how Luther translates the quoted passage in the first translation of the Psalms.

We are to be satisfied with the same, without worrying about the future, and command everything to God, who indeed wants to work through us, but in such a way that we ourselves do not know, as it were, like an ox that threshes and gathers, does not know what it is doing, nor is it worried about its food or the success of its work. So we also shall do what the Lord puts before us, shall suffer what He wills. But let all these things be as a morsel of bread, which we have on earth, lest we strive here for such a life as is set up according to our own endeavors, or there will be a continual unrest, as follows:

V. 18. 19. And all my labor that I had under the sun grieved me, that I should leave the same to a man that should be after me. For who knows whether he will be wise or foolish? And yet shall reign in all my work which I have wisely done under the sun. That is also vain].

It is quite the same opinion as in the preceding. For Solomon is very verbose and treats this piece at great length. Thus he says: "It grieves me to live; for though I have ordered and managed all my affairs in the best way, yet I do not know whether I shall have a wise or a foolish heir. If he is wise, he will be weary of what is mine and seek another, as I myself am weary of what is mine and seek sort and sort new things; if he is a foolish man, he will destroy it and have the same trouble in destroying it as I had in building it up, as the proverb says: The one builds up, the other tears down 2c. Thus the emperor Octavius decorated the city, Nero devastated it. Pompey had collected an immense amount of money in the public treasury to serve the state with it; afterwards Caesar plundered it, and this money was more to the ruin of the state than to its salvation. Therefore, whether the heir be wise or foolish, I have labored in vain and lost my life in vain labor, because I wanted to make provision for the future and did not use the present. Therefore, he adds:

V. 20-23 Therefore I turned away, that my heart might depart from all the work that I have done under the sun. For a man who has done his work with wisdom, reason and skill must leave it as an inheritance to another who has not worked at it. This is also vain and a great misfortune. For what does a man get from all his labor and toil of heart, which he has under the sun, but all his days of life pain, with sorrow and grief, that even his heart does not rest at night? That is also vain.

I have ceased, he says, so that I may abstain from all concern for the affairs that are going on under the sun. This is the word of a wise man who turns his heart from worry to peace. I will be content with the present and will work for the present, and suffer what God wills, not even worrying about tomorrow. This is the resolution that he confirms afterwards with a great abundance of words, saying:

For it must be a man who has done his work with wisdom, reason and skill 2c.

Here you see what he understands by "wisdom," namely, not that which has to do only with thoughts (speculatricem), but with the administration of affairs; by industria, or congruentia "skill," that everything is ordered in the right order and at the right time, as he himself [1 Kings 4:7] appointed twelve officers in the land, appointed the feeding [v. 22. f.], the horses [v. 26.] 2c. This, I say, he calls working with right wisdom. But this work or inheritance he must leave to a man who has not cooperated in this work 1) nay, what is still more unfortunate, to a man who does not respect it and consigns it to oblivion. He says: Even if I work a lot, I leave it to a man who either despises it or dissipates it, which is certainly quite vain.

For what does man get out of all his work 2c.

This is rich oratorical decoration

1) Erlanger: tempore instead of: opere.

That even his heart does not rest at night.

His heart has no rest even at night when he works in this way, so that he does not only accomplish and fortify the thing well by day, but also by night, when he has completed it, he takes care how he keeps it and increases it.

V. 24. Is it not better for a man to eat and drink, and for his soul to be in good health in his work? But I also saw this, that it comes from God's hand.

This is the main conclusion, indeed, the purpose of the whole book, which he will often repeat. Uldt this is the main passage, which interprets everything preceding and following. However, it agrees with the preceding in this way: The good days (voluptates) are reprehensible, which we want to prepare for ourselves in the future according to our advice; likewise the works are reprehensible, which we strive to carry out according to our advice. But the good life and work that God gives are good, and we should use them in the present without anxious concern for the future, whether it brings tribulation or good life. But who can do this? We have ears and do not hear, we have eyes and do not see, and no one follows; we are all so engrossed in our plans and worries to put our things into action and to carry them out. The heart is averse to counsel, and is daily more and more irritated and troubled. Those who are godly abstain from worrying; all the rest of men have a restless life until they die. That is why he says:

But such I also saw that comes from God's hand.

A saying that is well to be remembered, and a glorious teaching, but this one he emphasizes less than the previous one. This is because an affirmative sentence (affirmativa,) does not make such an impression as a negative one (negativa,) such as this affirmative saying: "I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." This is soon said, but it does not move us. In the ver-

But there is much greater power in the negative statement: "Thou shalt not have other gods beside me. So here, too, he treats this affirmative sentence, "It is good for a man to eat," with few words, but in the negative he uses many words to convict us and to show us our folly, namely, that we accomplish nothing with all our counsels and labors, since we are tormented by worries and have no use for the present. So he must speak to these rough people with rough and many words and examples; for to the wise the whole thing could be said in one word: The Lord Himself is your God 2c.

V. 25 For who has eaten and rejoiced more joyfully than I? 1)

Here he cites his experience: For if I, who have arranged many things and have had abundance of all goods, still have not obtained what I wanted, how much 2) less others, if God does not give happiness!

V. 26. For to the man that pleaseth him he giveth wisdom, and understanding, and joy; but to the sinner he giveth calamity, that he may gather and heap, and yet be given to him that pleaseth God. Therefore this is also vain misery.

He proves that this is a gift of God, that one can be content with the

1) The Latin text, to which the interpretation refers, reads: ^aru <juis plus eorukclit et plura toris Asssü quanu ego? For who has eaten more and done more outwardly than I?

2) Erlanger: rzuaudo instead of: yuauto.

Present. For it is given to the man who pleases him, without any merit beforehand. He divides the world into the godly and the godless. To the godly he gives, besides the gifts they have in common with others, especially wisdom and prudence; joy is also added, because they are satisfied with what is present, and are not tormented by thoughts and desires, as the godless are. That they have knowledge and are wise in the government of affairs 2c., this knowledge they have in joy and peace. But the wicked have tribulation, that they add and gather more and more, and are never satisfied. Then, though they have wisdom and skill, yet this is so mixed with trouble that it is more of a punishment to them, that they do not enjoy their labors; that they plow, build, but others enjoy it and get pleasure from it. What the wicked work and build, no one uses rightly but only the godly. So that which sinners accumulate 3) belongs to the godly, because they alone enjoy it with thanksgiving and joy, even though they have very little. The wicked, however, have theirs with great care and difficulty, but do not use it. Summa: The godly have the earth in truth, because they enjoy it with joy and peace. But the wicked have not, though they have. This is the vanity that the wicked have.

3) In the editions: prineipes, for which we have assumed, according to the Bible text, peeatores.

The third chapter.

V. 1. To every thing there is a season, and to every purpose under heaven there is an hour.

Here, too, Solomon speaks of human works, that is, of those that were done according to human advice. The commentators who do not take this into account think that he is talking about the corruption of man.

The time of the created things. Understand, therefore, that all human works and undertakings have a certain and definite time of their happening, their beginning and their end, and are not in the capacity of man, so that it is said against free will that we are not entitled to time, manner and effect.

He does not prescribe the things that are to be done, and that here our attempts and efforts fail completely, but that everything goes or comes when God has determined it. But he proves this with examples of human works, whose times are beyond the choice of men, in order to conclude from there that men toil in vain with their attempts, even if they should burst, if their time and the hour determined by God has not come. Here belongs what is written in the Gospel [Joh. 2, 4.]: The hour for it (hora ejus) has not yet come. Likewise [Joh. 16, 21.]: "A woman, when she gives birth, has sadness, because her hour has come." Thus the divine power comprehends everything under certain hours, so that they cannot be hindered by anyone.

But, you will say, how is man appointed lord over things, Genesis 1:28 ff, if he cannot rule them according to his will and use them according to his desire? I answer: 1) We are appointed lords over things in such a way that we can use them for the present, but we cannot rule them by our worries and suggestions. No one can do anything for the future by his efforts. For how should he who is uncertain about the future be able to determine anything concerning future things? Therefore, God wants us to use the creatures, but freely, as He presents it, without prescribing time, manner and hour. For these are in the hand of the Lord, lest we should think that it is in our hand to use things when we will, when He does not give them. Therefore Sirach says [Cap. 15, 14. f. freely according to the Vulgate]: God 2) has given man power to take his own counsels, but he has added commandments according to which he shall govern his counsels and actions 2c.

Each has its time.

That is, his appointed hour. Now, when man goes beyond the same, and

If a man wants to accomplish everything through his advice and efforts, he will get nothing out of it but vanity. Many work so that they may become rich, but accomplish nothing. Others, however, become rich even without work, because God has given them the hour; to those he has not given it.

And all presuppositions 2c.

[Propositum] in the Hebrew XXX, which is generally translated by studium or beneplacitum, does not seem to me to be inappropriately translated by voluntas, as Ps. 1:2: "He takes pleasure (voluntas) in the law of the LORD"; for XXX means "that one may go about and take pleasure"; the desire (desiderium) to fulfill the law. So also here: All that men desire and wish for, they indeed seek after and want, but they only obtain plague, because they do not meet the hour which they anticipate, therefore they obtain nothing. Therefore, one should simply put things aside and use the present, and abstain from desiring future things. If you do otherwise, you will have nothing but gloom.

V. 2. There is a time to be born, there is a time to die.

He proves what he had said with examples of things and things of men. The birth, he says, has its time, likewise the death its time. And just as we do not have our birth in our power, so also not the death. And yet nothing is more (*plus*) ours than life and all our limbs, namely, to use them; but dominion is not given to us, even for a moment; 3) in vain, therefore, do we undertake to establish it by laws. A child is in the hand of God, and it is not born until the hour of birth has come. The women are troubled and distressed by the birth of the child, and predict the time.

1) Erlanger: respondo instead of: respondeo.
2) Veus is missing from the Erlanger.

3) The punctuation in the Erlanger is quite wrong here; neither here, nor before after "gebräitchen" is a distinguishing mark.

but it is nothing certain. So we do not die even when it is most dangerous and quite desperate for us, unless the hour is there. Why then do we fear death? You cannot live longer than God has decreed, nor die sooner. For so says Job, Cap. 14, 5: "Man has his appointed time, the number of his months is with thee; thou hast set a goal, which he shall not pass over."

But you say: Many perish by their own will and by their audacity, who would otherwise live longer, some have hurled themselves alive into abysses 2c., could not these then have kept life longer? I answer: No; GOD gave them the hour and also those means [to death] and the manner of death. Experience also teaches this. Some receive mortal wounds, and are easily healed and live; others are hardly slightly injured, but still die. The astrologers attribute this to the stars, others to luck. But the holy scripture attributes this to God, by whom the time (momenta) of our life and death is fixed, who cares nothing whether you die of a great or a small wound, that he may put to shame all human wisdom and counsel. 1) But this is a great comfort to Christians, that they know that death is not in the power of tyrants, nor is it put into the hands of any creature; nor are they at all afraid of death, but die as children when it pleases the Lord. Therefore, as it is said of the time of birth and death, so it must be said of all other human works, as follows:

Planting has its time, eradicate that is planted has its time.

These are works of human life, but as little in our hands as life itself. In spring the planting happens, in autumn the extermination; everything as God gives it and decrees it, and it cannot be done differently by us.

V. 3-8. strangle, heal break, build weep, laugh lament, dance scatter stones, gather stones heart, far from heart seek, lose keep, throw away tear, sew up keep silent, talk love, hate strife, peace

has its time.

Experience belongs to this register, so that it can be applied to the whole course of life. For it happens that one sows, another drives, one acquires, another scatters. In short, every single work of human life has its appointed time, outside of which one can do nothing, and in vain undertakes everything that one might undertake. Crying has its time and laughing has its time; it often happens that when we want to be most cheerful, suddenly a disturbance occurs. So happiness has its hour. All this proves by experience that we, I say, can do nothing with our advice, but that what can be done is offered at his hour. Therefore, we should not agonize over future things, but enjoy the present.

V. 9. Work as you will, you can do no more.

That is, if the time or the favorable time (χαρως) is not there, the worker does not establish anything. He, who works (factor), has nothing else than his hour, If this does not come, he can erect nothing. "But if the hour arrives, he also arrives."

V. 10. Therefore I saw the trouble that God gave to men to be troubled within.

This is an explanation of all the preceding. In all these works, he says, I saw that men do nothing by 2) themselves.

2) per is missing in the Erlanger.

1) Wittenbergers: ^t; Jenaers and Erlangers:

unless their hour is at hand. But those who want to anticipate their hour have trouble, worry and distress, so that they may be taught by their experience and refrain from worrying about the future and make use of the present.

V. 11: But he does everything well in his time.

Now this is the other part. Those who do not expect the hour have trouble; those who expect it have joy. For everything that God does and that happens by God's gift at His hour is delightful, that is, when the heart is empty of worries, and yet it encounters something that is dear to it, or a joyful sight comes before its eyes, 2c., that gives great delight. Therefore, these people have joy where others have tribulation, because they do things in their own time, which is given to them by God.

And let her heart be troubled, how it shall go: 1) For man cannot accomplish the work which God doeth, neither the beginning nor the end.

This is a confirmation of the previous. He says: Although God has given the world into the heart of men, they cannot rule it with their counsels. But it is a Hebrew expression "to give into the heart" or "to speak into the heart" for giving or speaking sweetly and kindly. He wants to say: God gives the world not only into the power of men, that they may use the present, but also into their hearts, that they may use it pleasantly and with pleasure, "that they may have joy and delight in it". And yet man cannot know when the beginning or the end of the work is, when or how long he will have it. Therefore, man should be satisfied that he has the world to his use. In a similar way Paul says Apost. 14, 17: "And indeed he hath not left himself unwitnessed, hath done us much good, and hath given us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons,

1) The words which Luther later rendered in the Bible thus: "And let her heart be troubled, how it should go", read in our Scripture: Ut munum ūeāit in <?or eornin (he has given the world into her heart). This is what the interpretation refers to.

fills our hearts with food and joy." And in another place [1 Tim. 6:17], "Who giveth us abundantly all things to enjoy." This joy a Christian has, and any one would have it if he could be satisfied with what is present. St. Jerome rightly says in the preface to the Bible: "A believer has the whole world of riches, nor is an unbeliever the master of a penny, as the proverb says: "A miser lacks both what he has and what he does not have.

For man can not meet or find the work 2c.

That means: Man cannot know, even if he should torture himself to death, when God will do good, when to begin, when to end, just as no one can know or say the hour at which someone will be born, live or die, no matter how hard he struggles. Therefore one must say: Lord, it is up to you to give what is to come; meanwhile I will enjoy what is present and the life you have already given me. So also the other acts of life, whose register he has just listed, are not in the power of man. For if this were in the power of men, many would always make war, others would always play, build 2c., for many toil at it. Now the whole world is ours, only we are not to dictate to God the time and the way we want to use it. God says: I do not want to be measured according to your counsels, otherwise everything shall be yours, and also I myself want to be yours. Now he concludes as in the previous chapter:

V. 12, 13. Therefore I perceived that there was nothing better in it than to be glad and to do him good in his life. For every man that eateth and drinketh, and is of good courage in all his work, is the gift of God.

This is sufficiently understood from the foregoing. For he wants to say: Nothing is better for a man in such troublesome business than that he enjoys the things of the present and is of a cheerful and happy spirit without sorrow and worry for the future. But that one can do this, that is

God's gift. I can teach, he says, but I cannot teach or give so that it is done. At the same time, he shows what to do and teaches where to receive it. He teaches that our worries only bring affliction, but he exhorts that one should call upon God to take away these worries and give prosperity and peace of heart.

V. 14. I noticed that everything that God does always exists; one cannot add to it, nor detract from it; and this is what God does, that one should fear Him.

That is, I have seen that all that God does endures, but our works are uncertain and vain. The contrast is to be noted. God alone, he says, can carry out his counsels and establish them at a certain hour. To whom he has given this gift of enjoying in the present, he has it. He is faithful and reliable. What he gives, no one takes away. If he gives life, no one can snatch it away, even if the world and the devil rage, because he is certain and constant. If he gives good eyes, I will keep them, even if the devil scatters all the dust of the earth in them. If he gives healthy and strong arms or legs, no one can take them 2c. Our works all have their hour, these we cannot do. Who can? God himself makes this hour, not luck or fate, as the philosophers think. If the one who made the hour allows it, it comes.

Why then does he afflict men so with these vain thoughts, having reserved this hour for things? Therefore, he says, so that people may fear him, so that we may not be presumptuous in his works, and do nothing in a hopeful and presumptuous way but from ourselves, as Paul also teaches [Rom. 4, 16. Phil. 2, 12. 13.]: Walk in fear, as you know that it does not depend on anyone's willing or running, because God himself works both the willing and the doing. Whoever believes this, namely that the things themselves are not in our hands, does nothing in a sacrilegious way, but places everything in the hands of God as the worker and expects it from him. If he gives, he enjoys it; if he does not give, he lacks it.

same, when He takes it away, He suffers it. Thus, God's glory and our humiliation and right worship remain in us. For this is to fear God, to have God before one's eyes, to know that He looks upon all our works, and to know Him as the One from whom all good and all evil come [Amos 3:6].

V. 15. what God does, that stands there; and what he wills to do, that must come to pass; for he seeks and pursues after him. 1)

Above in the first chapter [v. 9] he had said: "What is it that has happened? Just that which will happen hereafter" 2c. This is quite different from what he says here, "That which has come to pass is now here." For there he spoke of the works and things of men, here of the deeds of GOD. The human heart cannot be satisfied with what is present, nor want what is now, but what is to come. But when it has what is to come, it is not yet satisfied, but seeks something else again. The heart is not satisfied. This is the nature of the human heart, that it always looks at what is to come, and yet is not satisfied. But God does and acts in the opposite way. For with him, what has been is still there. That is, he does not turn away to future things, for it is said of him [Gen. 1:31]: "He looked at all that he had made, and behold, it was very good." God remains with His work which He does, and does not rush or fly after other and again other desires of the future, as the human mind does. And those who walk according to God also do so; they do not allow themselves to be drawn away to the future by neglecting the present. A godly man works in a constant way and enjoys things constantly.

For God seeks and pursues him.

He compares, as I said, our actions with the actions of God.

1) Different from this our Bible text Luther translates here thus: Huoâ Mit, Uoe ipsurn Hain est, Huock erit, iâ (MiMm. Mit. Lt Dsus Huaerit en, "tinMkl irpeâiantur (What has been, the same is now; what will be, that has already been. And GOD strives after it, even if one tries to hinder it). The AusleguiP rhymes, however, also very well to the text of the Bible.

Our actions are such that we disregard what we have and become weary of it, and look for what we want to have. But God pursues what is there and perseveres in His work, so that what He does may endure. This is also the way the godly do. So he wants to say: Even if man wants and tries to hinder God's work, God still pursues him and defends his work, which men try to hinder, to challenge 2c. Thus God had appointed David king; Absalom persecuted him and afflicted him, but God restored that which Absalom prevented. That which comes from God is not as fickle as human counsel, for God does not grow weary of His counsel.

V. 16. 17. Further, I saw under the sun a place of judgment, where there was an ungodly creature; and a place of righteousness, where there were ungodly. Then thought I in mine heart, God must judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a season to every purpose and to every work.

What shall I say of the error and vanity of man's doings, since even in the place of judgment, that is, in the exercise of law and judgment, the ungodly and ungodliness do their thing. Solomon does not so much complain about the fact that godlessness is in the place of judgment as about the fact that godlessness cannot be stopped in the place of judgment, as if he wanted to say: Everything is so vain that even this effort to stop the unrighteousness of the rulers has no continuation. When I saw this ungodly nature, I thought of doing away with it, but I realized that I would not be able to do so until God improved it. Our Prince Frederick also used to say: The longer I rule, the less I know how to rule. Likewise: Where shall I finally find people whom I can trust? See how in all courts of princes, however good people there may be, who have the best for the state in mind and advise, you can always find some who put great difficulties in the way of everyone's advice and disturb everything. So great, therefore, is the wickedness of men, that you cannot best them all.

So Solomon wants to say this: If someone should struggle here, that he wants to improve all, he will have nothing else than tribulation and heartache. Therefore one must command GOtte and lift and clear away this stone, which one can lift and clear away; which mau not lift, one must leave lying. I, he says, have been a wise king of a holy people, and have carefully cultivated righteousness, yet I have had to leave ungodly people in public offices; though I have deposed some, yet others have always come in unawares. What should not happen to others? Therefore, the best thing would have been to execute what God gives, but to leave the rest to God, who will judge the righteous and the wicked in his time; people do not want to do it, nor are they able to do it, no matter how much they want to.

For there is a time for everything that is noble and for all works.

Everything, he says, has its time. Infirmities cannot be corrected until their appointed hour. In vain, therefore, do we anticipate this time and undertake to improve everything in the future. I did not succeed in doing this even with the authorities. Therefore, I have worked to the best of my ability and have improved what I could; the rest I have ordered GOtte to do.

V. 18, 19. I spoke in my heart of the nature of men, in which God indicates and makes them look as if they were like cattle among themselves. For man is like cattle; as these die, so dies he.

This passage is somewhat obscured, not only by its fault, but also by that of the commentators, who are very troubled, since they are generally of the opinion that Solomon speaks in the person of the wicked; but this is quite cold, although generally accepted. It seems only that the sense must be taken simply. He has given a comparison or conciliation (*concionem*) of men's pretensions and endeavors, namely, that all human counsels and pretensions are vain. Finally he comes to the heart

sorry with the authorities, that those who should be an example to all others are also vain. Thus he passes from the particular in the preceding to the general. What shall I say of individuals, since we are all like cattle; is not this a miserable thing among men? What difference is there 1) between them and the cattle, which likewise do not remember God? But here the question arises: Why did he compare man with cattle, as if they had nothing more than cattle, while he taught above godly being or fear of God, and that after this life there was eternal life? This is what has most troubled the commentators. The answer is briefly this: The commentators have not paid attention to the purpose (scopum) of the book, nor have they been mindful of what it so often inculcates, that it speaks of the things under the sun, for which in the New Testament and in common life the expression is used: of the things in the world. For this booklet distinguishes the godly life from the life of the world or the life under the sun. To have a joyful heart and to rejoice in the present in the fear of God is not a thing of the world, but a gift of God from heaven and above the sun. But to have tribulation in these things is not to differ from cattle in anything.

On the nature of human beings (de genere vitae filiorum hominum).

In Hebrew is a word which has a very wide meaning, but in this form it denotes the way, the condition, the order, the walk. As in the 110th Psalm, v. 4: "Thou art a priest for ever after the manner of Melchizedech." I believe that it actually means, "one being." The epistle to the Hebrews has treated this word of the Psalm gloriously. Namely, [Heb. 7:3, 17, 21.] as Melchizedek had no father and mother 2c., so art thou, saith he, 2c., after the same manner or order 2c. But this word comes from

that is thing, cause. But it denotes

the behavior, the happening (contingentiam), so that the meaning is: "I spoke in my heart of the life of the people", that is, how it is with the people on earth, "how it is with the people, and how they have themselves".

For man is like cattle.

That is, the same thing happens, the same thing happens to the people as to the cattle. He wants to say: The human race is inactive (vagatur), like the cattle, and has no more profit from life than the cattle. As cattle die, so do men die. He speaks of the hour of death, not of death. That is, just as the hour of death of animals is uncertain, so also that of men. An animal does not know when it will have sickness or health, or when it will die, neither does man. Why then are we hopeful, since we have no more knowledge of the hour of death than cattle?

V. 19. 20. And all have one breath; and man hath nothing more than cattle; for all is vain. It all leads to one place; it is all made from dust and returns to dust.

This passage cannot be twisted to mean that the spirit (animi) is mortal, for it speaks of things under the sun. The world certainly cannot understand nor believe that the soul (animam) is immortal. Yes, if you look at it as it goes, and at the appearance of which Solomon says: "Man dies like cattle; men have the same breath as cattle, so we agree with the same in appearance. The philosophers have indeed discussed the immortality of the soul, but so coldly, as if they had only to do with fables, but especially Aristotle disputes so about the soul, that he has everywhere very carefully and cunningly taken care that he did not speak anywhere of its immortality, and he has not wanted to explicitly say what his opinion would be. Plato has rather reelected what he has heard, than that he has expressed his opinion. And it cannot be explained by any human reason

1) Erlanger: ctiscivMt instead of: äiserepaM.

The immortality of the soul must be shown, because it is a thing that is not under the sun, that one believes that the soul is immortal. In the world it is not seen and recognized for certain that the souls are immortal.

It all goes to One Place 2c.

If the Lord did not give man his spirit, no one could say that man is different from cattle, because both man and cattle, having been made from the same dust, return to it. And this returning to the same place is a reason of proof for the similarity between man and cattle. Not that it is so, but because the world, which judges by the outward appearance and behavior common to both, thinks so, and cannot think otherwise; but, to believe otherwise, something higher than the world is necessary.

"By this GOD tests them" (Quo probat eos [XXXX]). 1) The Hebrew word means to purify or choose. GOD, he says, allows both men and cattle to walk and live at the same time in the same condition, in the same form. But God allows this to test men, whether they look only at these outward things, and whether they are moved by these evidences, on which the wicked look, and do not believe other things. But also the godly are trained in this, so that they gain more faith. They walk in the same way as the wicked and the cattle, but in the spirit they are comforted and pacified within.

V. 21. Who knows whether the breath of men goes upward, and the breath of cattle goes downward under the earth?

He says par excellence: Show me a man, not of the godly, but of those who are under the sun or in the world, who can claim that the soul is

He sees that there is no difference between the living breath of men and animals, for death comes to both immediately as their breath ceases. No one among men knows this. But what we know, we know not as men, but as children of God and above the sun, since we are in the heavenly nature [Eph. 2, 6.], and belong to heaven. In the world, however, this knowledge does not exist, nor is there peace, but everything happens as with cattle. There were in Greece very excellent spirits, who nevertheless never said anything consistent about this matter. Lucian, a man of sharp mind and pleasant nature, disputes about it vehemently, but only ridicules the opinions of the philosophers of the soul.

V. 22. Therefore I see that there is nothing better than for a man to rejoice in his work, for that is his portion. For who will bring him to see what will happen after him?

This is a saying for godly people. For they have grasped this doctrine, but the wicked are tormented by the likeness of cattle, and have nothing else of their works but vanity. For this doctrine they know and believe not, because reason persuadeth them not of it. And from this passage the whole crowd of philosophers is convicted, who raise many things about the immortality of the soul, which they themselves do not believe. This, therefore, is the part of the righteous, that they enjoy the present and are not troubled by the future, but this does not happen under the sun. But those who do otherwise suffer a twofold disadvantage: they have no use for the present, and they do not gain the future. They are like the dog in Aesop, which snatches at the shadow to catch something, but loses the meat. So also those are tired of the present and look for something else. And up to now Solomon has spoken in general about the vanity of the bet in general, now the special follows.

1) Here the interpretation resorts to the 18th verse, where in our Bible these words are rendered thus: "In it GOD indicates." In the editions they are highlighted in print as if they were here in the text. In the Vulgate: ut xroduret eos.

The fourth chapter.

V. 1. I turned and looked at 1) all the wronged under the sun: and, behold, there were tears of them that were wronged, and had no comforter; and they that wronged them were too mighty to have a comforter.

He has examined the vain counsels of the human heart and seen how God prevents them, namely, because only what God orders and does reaches its goal and cannot be hindered; now he goes on to enumerate the hindrances to human counsels, that is, the means and causes by which God tends to dissuade us from our precepts and counsels, and to force us to use what is present. I saw, he says, that neither rulers nor kings can remove injustice and injuries from human affairs; indeed, God throws evil and violent people in their way, from whom they cannot be freed. David, as a very good prince, wants to take care of the state in the best way, but Joab and Absalom prevent it. He tried to get Joab out of the way, but was not able to do so. Thus the princes have their troublemakers, whom they are forced to suffer, through whom God hinders the counsel of the wise. I have also seen that judges were corrupt, and tyrants oppressed widows and orphans 2c. And in general, the violence and unruliness of man is too great to be governed and corrected by man; that can only be accomplished by God.

V. 2. 3. Then I praised the dead, who were already dead, more than the living, who still had life; and he who is not yet is better than both, and does not realize the evil that is done under the sun.

Here again the smart ones talk as if Solomon speaks as an ungodly man, who

1) "an" is missing in the ordinary Bible editions, but is in the Weimar and Hirschberg.

to the living, while Augustine, when he treats the passage [Matth. 26, 24. Marc. 14, 21.] 2): "It would be better for the same man that he was never born", says that it is better to be a bad man than not to be at all. But these people practice sophistry. But the damned, and those who are in misfortune, are in truth so minded and judge as Solomon says in this passage. For these would certainly rather not be, than to be tormented like this again and again, and this would also be better. So he rightly says here: If you look at the misery of human tribulations, and only turn your eye to this life, you may praise the dead more than the living. "It is better for one to be dead" than to see such great misery and calamity. So he says nothing of the judgment to come, but of the things that are done under the sun; where it is better not to be, than to see human affliction. The same opinion was held by the pagans, who say that the best thing is not to be born, or to die soon after birth. Therefore, this passage must be understood simply comparatively (per comparationem).

V. 4: I have seen labor and skill in all things, and one envies another. That is also vain and toil.

Another kind of misfortune and hindrance to human authority and counsel; as with the great and mighty there are intrigues and oppressions, so with the common people there is nothing but envy, discord and hatred. He says: Go down to the common people, there you will find evil-minded craftsmen, you will perceive their malice, their deceit, their fraud, their evil gossip, how they hate and envy each other without end "If someone can do something, one is an enemy to him." He who is a good craftsman has a thousand haters, and it goes according to the saying of the poet: It envies the potter the potter, who

2) In Latin: locurn loünnis. -

Blacksmith the blacksmith, the poet the poet 2c. This is the accident and the common course among all craftsmen.

Imagine that someone wants to learn a craft, which he hopes will bring him happiness or sustenance in the future; if he learns it and precedes others, he will have the envy and hatred of many. What shall he do then? shall he stop? shall he learn nothing? No, but he should work to the best of his ability and command God to do the work. What shall we do in our studies? shall we stop because the students do not accept this or that? or because the scholars are despised? No, do not desist from what you are doing (*fac quod facis*); meanwhile wait for the hour, for you know that it is good to teach others. Therefore, do not look at the world or at your advice. Wherever you look, trouble will meet you.

Today we wanted to counsel the German country through the Gospel and hoped that all would accept it, but the very ones whom we helped to be free from the tyranny of the pope are defiling us, and those whom 1) we believed would assist us are trampling us underfoot. What shall we do here? Shall we not become unwilling? Shall we not leave everything in the queue? No. Others may envy, despise, persecute; we want to persevere with teaching, working, writing and learning to the best of our ability, because God wants it that way. For no one can be without envy in the world who only wants to do right. We do not have to determine in advance the hour at which our work should be useful; God will see to it. Just do your work and do what God puts in front of you, and do not think that everything can be made right through you, so that all authorities are good, all craftsmen are united and righteous. That is why he says this:

I have seen skill in all things. 2)

That is, people who were exceedingly skilled at their tasks, but they could not do anything.

They could not carry out their wishes, because it was not in their power; the hatred of the neighbors opposed them and prevented them. Therefore, these are completely evangelical reminders and consolations, which call us away from the sorrow and distress in human affairs. For there is a great number of human vanities and troubles everywhere; everywhere they confront us. When I was a new preacher, I was serious about making everyone good, but I was told, and rightly so, "He has too yellow a beak to make all peelers pious." The same occurs in all offices. This evil goes through all classes. The best thing, therefore, is to enjoy what you have in the present, and to direct all action to what is present, and to let what is evil flow by. This is how you mock the world.

In short, let him who wishes to live calmly imagine that he will see nothing else in the world but vanity, and he will not grieve if something bad happens to him, but will rejoice in the good that is there. If you are urged by necessity to advise things, do what you can, and let God do what he wills. But if you want to interfere in the world of your own free will, to make everything crooked straight, to heal all ills, and to throw the devil out of the world, you will cause yourself trouble and heartache and nothing more, nor will you accomplish more than if you wanted to prevent the Elbe from flowing. Human affairs do not and cannot be governed by human will, but he who created all things governs them according to his will.

This is also vain and effort.

For if thou wilt put an end to this envy and exceedingly wicked things. Let them envy, let them hinder, let them act unjustly; if the Lord wants to use your work and your counsel, he will do so in his hour and in his place; this you expect. So, if he now wants to maintain the educational institutions (*studia*) and schools, he knows the time and persons through whom he will do it. The people we consider suitable for this are often the most unsuitable.

1) Erlanger: nos instead of: auo^.

2) In Latin: in artiūeidus - among the craftsmen.

V. 5 For the fool clasps his fingers together and eats his flesh.

The "fool" in this passage does not mean, as we generally understand it, a silly or foolish person, but a godless and good-for-nothing person, whom we call in German "a useless, hopeless person". Of this kind are those envious people who, although they can do nothing themselves, nevertheless disturb and hinder others. For such useless people, who have neither skill nor insight (*ingenio*), live to nothing but to be burdensome to others, like those who teach or learn badly, foolish and unlearned preachers. So also among the craftsmen the drones, whom we call "Hümpeler," who only hinder others, while they themselves do nothing right. Such people are obstacles to the regiment in the authorities, so that they hinder most the state, the studies and other good things, of which one hoped that they should promote most. Thus foolish preachers hinder the gospel more than the open 1) enemies of the gospel.

The fool intertwines his fingers.

He is not a steady worker, he is not attentive, but sleepy and lazy, because he does not take care of his work seriously, yes, he hinders others, despises them, speaks ill of them. This is the "interlacing of fingers", that one does nothing oneself and is even a hindrance to others. The same expression is also Proverbs 6:10 f.: "Clasp your hands together, and poverty will overtake you like a pedestrian." Therefore, what Pliny says, that the clasping of hands is of evil *ominosum*, seems to be quite rightly spoken, but it is not understood by those. On the other hand, it is said of a diligent and undaunted housewife [Proverbs 31:19] that her fingers (*manus*) grasp the spindle, that is, "she attacks it." These foolish and worthless people are now awakening us to God, so that He may prevent our counsels and our noble intentions.

He eats his meat.

This is again a Hebrew way of speaking, instead of: He martyres himself. 2) Similar

1) Erlanger: aperte instead of: aperti.

2) Erlanger: roaevrarb instead of: roaoerat 86.

It is in Job [Cap. 13, 14]: "I bite my flesh with my teeth." He wants to say: Such a clumsy and foolish man is of no use to himself, but to others he harms and resists, to others he envies, to himself he martyres. Such a man is to the community what rust is to iron and worms to wood, harmful to himself and to other people. "That's why they remain Hümpelers."

V. 6. It is better to have one hand full of rest than both fists full of trouble and sorrow.

This can be understood in such a way that this word is spoken in the person of a fool (imitative - imitating the fool), or that it is simply and assertively spoken by Solomon. If in the person of the fool, it must be taken to be the wise counsel of a foolish man who misuses a very good saying for his laziness, as such people are wont to do, as if to say: Why should I labor as that industrious man labors with his works and his diligence? Why should I toil? I get as much as another. Thus he excuses his indolence, as that monk said: it is nothing that he should toil with studies, since he receives just as fat meals as a doctor. We have to live among such people, even though they are unpleasant, in that we have to walk, as it were, through forests and thorn hedges, where one has to struggle through, however much the thorns hinder and endure. For this world is nothing but thorns. If it is said in an assertive way, it must be understood as words and a counsel of Solomon, which I like better. Then this will be the opinion: Since you see that there are obstacles in every undertaking, what will you do? Do not agonize over it if those fools hinder you. Rather, if the fool toils, work nevertheless and enjoy your portion with pleasure. If you cannot get both fists full, take even a handful as a gift from God and enjoy it, and however small your gain may be, be satisfied with it and live happily.

V. 7. 8. I turned and saw the vanity under the sun. It is an individual, and

He has neither child nor brother; nor is there an end to his labor, nor are his eyes full of riches. For whom do I labor, and break off my soul? That is also vain, and an evil toil.

Solomon continues with the enumeration of the pretentiousness and the worries of the human vanity. Thereby he also mentions that miser Euclio, who collects a lot of things and still does not enjoy them. The whole world in general lies in this vice. All seek their own and serve their belly. But he punishes above all those who torment themselves with the fact that they become rich, and yet only collect for others. They do not expect the hour when it will flow to them, nor the hour when they would like to enjoy it.

It is an individual, and not selbänder 2c.

The poets also condemn this vice and mock it with appropriate fables. For the miser does not enjoy, he only looks at the gold, but still his eyes are not satisfied, as the poets fable of Tantalus. For thus says Horace: 1)

Tantalus a labris sitiens fugientia captat Flumina.

2) Quid rides? mutato nomine de te Fabula narratur. Congestis undique saccis³) Indormis

inhians, et tanquam parcere sacris Cogitis, aut pictis tanquam gaudere tabellis. [In German: Der durstende Tantalus schnappt nach den von seinen Lippen fliehenden Gewässern. What are you laughing at? Under a different name this fable is about you. After you have collected money from everywhere, you, restless, still open your mouth for more, and yet, as if it were a sanctuary, you may not touch it, or you must rejoice in it as in a painted picture].

V. 9-12 It is better to be two than one, for they enjoy their work. If one of them falls, his companion helps him up. Woe to him who is alone! If he falls, there is no one else to help him up. Even if two lie together, they warm each other; how can a single man become warm? One may be overwhelmed by the other.

1) Horatii 8atvram. lip. I, sat. I, v. 68 sqq.

2) Jenaer and Erlanger: posala.

3) Erlanger: aasris.

But two may withstand; for a threefold cord is not easily broken.

This is a counsel of Solomon, by which he recommends that one have company and fellowship of goods, and exhorts us that we should use the present goods, and work, but not for ourselves alone, but also for the benefit of others. Fellowship is good for the preservation of goods. But the miser suffers no comrade and condemns the community of goods by piling up for himself alone, and is in truth the dog in the manger. 4) These individuals who accumulate goods that are not men but beasts and dogs, Solomon condemns here. It is exceedingly beautiful, he says, to live in the company and fellowship of goods. For when one fills 2c.

This passage they [the papists] have twisted to sin and confession, understanding and interpreting this text as follows: If a person fell into sin and did not have some holy man to confess to, he could not rise again to a life of godliness and grace. But it has been shown that Solomon speaks of the course of human life under the sun, against futile tribulation. 5) For he praises human fellowship, and the life of God. For he praises the human community and society in the enjoyment of goods against the hermit life of the miser. He wants to say: The miser is neither useful to himself nor to other people. No one can enjoy him, because he lives with no one, has his goods for himself alone, indeed, since he has them, he does not have them. But the one whose way of life is not so solitary, from him flow certainly significant advantages. He himself is of use to other people, and is also of use to others. For this community serves, as I said, to preserve and increase the goods. It is that he adds: "He has no one to help him up." Likewise, "How can an individual get warm?" He has no help, no counsel, no comfort in affliction. What has he if he scrapes together for himself alone? He only looks at his money like a painted picture.

4) That is, the dog itself cannot eat the food in the manger, but bites other animals away from their food.

5) Erlanger: Ilumanara instead of: variam.

A three-fold cord does not break easily.

He draws up an excellent proverb, as he often does afterwards, in the manner of a good preacher. The meaning is: It is better to have companions and to enjoy things together, than to be a lonely miser, who is only concerned about himself and who gets things for himself. In society there is mutual help, common work, common comfort, while the miser's life is miserable, useless and dreary, and he must finally perish miserably. This he confirms by the saying, which seems to be taken from there: A father, a wise man, called his sons to him when he was dying. He gave them a bundle of rods and told them to break them. Since they could not break them all at once, they took them one by one and broke them. Thus he taught his sons that their goods would endure if they were united and helped one another; for through unity even small goods increase, through discord they are scattered and melt away.

V. 13. A poor child who is wise is better than an old king who is a fool and does not know how to be careful.

Now, having said of the miser, he passes on to another kind of people who are of no use to themselves or to others. As he said that there is vanity in avarice, he now says the same of ambition. For many are born on the royal throne and yet do not remain. Many come from prison to the royal throne and become rich. Others come out of their royal position and become servants, so that we may know that our nobility is nothing. Our advice, our efforts are of no avail. Therefore, those captives become kings and rule well, because God provides them with such things. Born kings rule badly. I have seen many children who were well brought up and instructed in the best way, who nevertheless, after the disciplinarian was no longer there and they had received their inheritance, became very bad boys, and some who came up without discipline and instruction became good men. What should one do now? Should one not be careful

on the children? Should they not be taught? Should you neglect everything? No.

Although it seems as if this book teaches that one should neglect things and desist, it does nothing less than that. But it teaches us that we should desist from our counsels and cares, by which our hearts are troubled. Thus the gospel, in rejecting righteousness from works, does not make the hand free, but the conscience. For works God has commanded, worry forbidden. Therefore, one should instruct the children, but put the care for prosperity in the hands of God, just as the farmer must sow the seed, but put the care for prosperity in the hands of God. Thus, by the law that He gave to this people, God did not neglect anything that served to govern them properly, even though what should have been done was not done, and it turned out badly for many. So the authorities must diligently see to it that the commonwealth is well ordered and fortified, but nevertheless they should not rely on their care and counsel. One must make an effort, carry out the work, but set aside worries and sorrow, and not want to prescribe the way, the place and the time; just as the farmer sows the seed in the field in his own time, then goes away and sleeps, and does not worry at all about the prosperity, otherwise he would never have rest. Therefore, no one thinks that Solomon condemns human work. He forbids worry and anxious anxiety, but he demands work.

V. 14. One comes out of prison to the kingdom, and one born in his kingdom is impoverished.

This is so in accordance with the foregoing and so related to it: Therefore a wise child is better than an old man who is a fool, because it often happens 1) that someone comes from prison to the kingdom. One becomes from a king a shameful and foolish man, as Manasseh and Zedekiah. Joseph, on the other hand, was in prison and is a prince.

1) Erlanger and Jenaer:
ooAtldxlt.

instead of:

In our time, the king of Hungary, Matthias, has become a very powerful king from prison. Such things often happen in human affairs, to which the events in Rome testify the most. Valerianus, a not bad emperor, was made the footstool of the Persian king when he was captured, and remained so until his death. But how did this happen to him? Because his hour had come, which God had appointed for him. What is the use of worrying? "It is enough that every day has its own plague" [Matth. 6, 34]. Therefore, a king's son must be instructed in a royal way, but to prescribe what he should do in the future and how he will be a good king is, in truth, vain trouble. This, however, must be put in the hands of God's counsel and will, saying: "Dear Lord God, I am instructing this boy, but you will make him a king if you wish.

V. 15. 16. And I saw that every living thing under the sun walketh with another child, which shall arise in his stead. And there was no end of the people that went before him, nor of them that followed him; yet they were not glad. This is also vain and a lamentation.

Solomon calls "the living" those who live deliciously, and live as if this life were their own, and created the world for their sake, as the great ones, the people at court, are wont to do. But it remains in the example of the education of a king, whether it concerns the worldly regiment or matters of war. Education, he says, is good, but human will and nobility do not direct what it wills. The counsels of education are deceptive; the effort spent on them is necessary, but the success and the care often fail. Therefore he teaches that our counsels are vain. For if the care and counsel of education fail with kings, how much more will it fail with men of the people, where care is less and education more negligent!

1) Erlanger: aliis instead of: pledeis.

When he says that "the living" or all the great ones under the sun walk with another child, he does not mean all the living or great ones who find under the sun, but the people of this kingdom and king, or even the greater part, so that the meaning is: All the people who are around the king prove their devotion to the king's son. All are attached to him and have the best hope from him. For the young prince was the other child (adolescens secundus), and he was to stand in the place of the other king, that is, the future king after this king, who was to succeed the father in the kingdom. In front of him and behind him are innumerable people, that is, he is accompanied by a great multitude or retinue of his people, satellites and servants, in front and behind, according to royal fashion. There was great hope in this youth that he would become greater than his father. All prophesied good things about him, and yet they were not pleased with him. Why is that? Because he did not meet their expectation, but became a dull and foolish man, as the proverb says, that either a king or a fool is born.

Thus Nero became king with great hope and happiness, to such an extent that the first five years of his reign were praised and lauded, but the later years were quite unequal to them. Thus Heliogabal and Commodus also became princes and emperors under great expectations, but they deceived the hopes and expectations of all. For the one degenerated into an exceedingly shameful man, indeed, who was rather a beast than a man; but the other became from a Commodus a right Incommodus, 2) and a second Nero. Therefore a good prince is a very rare bird, like the phoenix. For human advice goes astray, so that we often have reason to be most dissatisfied with the one in whom we placed great hope. Thus even Rehoboam, the son of the exceedingly wise father, from whom one undoubtedly hoped the best, since he had been given the best by his father, became the most unhappy.

2) A play on the name of Commodus: aommoänk, a sufferer; ineoninioaeus, a sufferer.

The man who had been brought up very well by his father was nevertheless quite dissimilar to his father. If, therefore, in the highest estates human counsels fail, they will fail much more in lower estates, in your house, in your office 2c., because there, too, either a master (artificem) or a fool must be born 2c.

He speaks of kings, however, because the deeds of outstanding persons are outstanding, that is, visible to all. In contrast, the deeds of private individuals are generally ignored, or at least less observed. However, according to the German proverb, "A wise man does no small foolishness. If a person from the people makes a mistake or does something foolish, not much attention is paid to it. Otherwise, the situation of private individuals is the same as that of kings. 1) Therefore, Solomon does not condemn the idea of educating a king, of making a son rich, or of ruling a house, but he condemns our counsel by which we want to direct it. He commands work, but forbids care. Work unceasingly, but command GOtte the prosperity and the effect. Remember the example of the king who was carefully educated, but who did not follow the-

nor changed, so that you know that things are not carried out according to our advice and efforts, but by the will of God, who has determined for every thing its time and hour, apart from which nothing happens anywhere. Therefore, if education is successful, 2) we should give thanks, not to our efforts or worries, but to God, who gives the blessing. If the seeds grow, we owe that also not to ourselves, but to God. For how could a man protect the seeds, whether from the birds, or from the wild beasts, from caterpillars and locusts, 3) even from the envy of the devil? It is therefore not in our efforts, but in God's goodness and blessing, so that we may give thanks only to Him, who works all things in all according to His good pleasure. It is the same with the education of children. If thou hast a good son, say, The Lord hath given and directed it; but if he be not well, say, So it is in the life of man. I have worked, but the Lord has not willed it; let his name be blessed.

2) From the preceding kuooeäit is to be added: kuooekku".

3) In the editions: lupis, for which probably druetiis is to be put. Already the first translator took offense at the "wolves" and omitted the word. The similar sound of the words has caused this mistake with the rewriter.

1) Erlanger: rsZuuru instead:

The fifth chapter.

Cap. 4, 17. Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and come that thou mayest hear. This is better than the sacrifice of fools, for they know not what evil they do.

The fifth chapter begins here, because it is a new teaching. What happens to the unintelligent when they read this book is what happens to the wicked when they hear the Gospel preached. For when they hear that righteousness by faith and Christian liberty are preached, but righteousness by works is denied, they at once make the

Conclusion: So we do not need to do good works, indeed, we want to sin, because faith is enough. On the other hand, when works are preached as the fruit of faith, they immediately attach justification to them, and thereby seek to attain salvation. Thus, God's word is always followed by the two pieces, presumption and despair, so that it is exceedingly difficult to stay on the middle road. It is the same with this booklet. For when the unintelligent hear this teaching, that we should have a calm and quiet heart, that we must render all things unto God, they conclude: If all things are in the hand of God, then we are in the hand of God.

we do not want to work anything; as others are lacking on the other side, that they are too worried, and want to measure and govern everything in any way. But we must take the middle road. We should work diligently and do what we can, according to the word of God, but we should not measure our work according to our efforts, but attribute all our doings, counsel and success to divine wisdom.

Therefore, it seems to me that Solomon is issuing a warning and a salutary exhortation at this point to those who do not walk on the middle road, but are either too casual about work or too concerned about it, advising them to let themselves be governed by God's word and to work diligently in the meantime.

Keep your foot when you go to the house of God.

The house of God or the temple is not instituted for the sake of sacrifice as well as for the sake of preaching, so that the people of God might gather there to hear the word of His God, as a prince summons his own, not only that they might eat and drink, but that they might hear His word 2c. Therefore, where the preaching of the word of God is not, neither is the assembly (conventus) of the people of God or the house of God. He now commands rather that one should keep the foot than the heart, namely, lest they be offended when they hear such teaching. See that you do not go astray, he says, when you hear this teaching, as the prophet also says in Psalm 73:2], "I would have stumbled with my feet." For every word of God, whether it is about the peace of conscience or about outward peace, is followed by trouble, "because it is a sign that is contradicted, since it is set for the fall and rising of many" [Luc. 2, 34.], as Christ also says [Matth. 11, 6. 1: "Blessed is he who does not take offense at me." In short, the word is a vexation and a foolishness to the flesh.

Therefore he says: "You hear what I teach, but see to it that you do not get angry and make a nuisance for yourself - that you, when you hear one

You must have a calm heart, and your efforts are vain, you do not say, so I do not want to work anything, or think that one must take care of nothing, or again, you are not too anxiously worried, and want to govern everything by your reason. Human worries, thoughts and counsels don't do anything, like Plato's world regiment (Politia). But if you want to avoid all troubles, surrender yourself to the words and works of God, and leave your thoughts and counsels aside and throw them from you, "let it be said to you, hold out your ears", come that you may hear. For nowhere is our path safe in all human and divine affairs unless we give ourselves wholly to the word and work of God, and thereby persevere without all wavering of mind.

That is better than the fools' sacrifice.

This is added proverbially to confirm this saying. "Hearing the word" stands higher or is better than all the gifts, services and sacrifices of fools. This he says for this reason, that he may exalt hearing and obedience to the word above all works. For it is quite proper that we hear the counsel of our God above all things, as often as we come together in the house of God. But the wicked toil with works, and leave God's counsel in suspense.

And here you see what "a fool" means in Hebrew, namely not such a person whom we call a stick-fool (morionem), but such a one who does not hear God's word or does not believe it from the heart, although he may otherwise be a very clever man, because these people do not know God, nor what God is, much less care about it, but are directed here and there by their worries, and care for what should not be cared for. Their concern is that they sacrifice. But you take the best part, hear the word of God and be careful not to get angry.

For they know not what evil they do.

With these words he himself interprets who "the fools" are. For surely no one is so evil that he would do evil if he knew it was so evil in the sight of God. Dar-

He calls those people fools, ignorant, blind, who do many things as if they were good, and with great earnestness, but do not know that these sacrifices, which they perform with such great effort, are completely ungodly. Thus Christ called the Pharisees blind men, who offered many sacrifices, labored with works, but left faith and love in abeyance, not even knowing of them, calling good that which was evil, and again. He therefore rightly calls them fools.

But you see that the highest and best conduct in the service of God is called foolish and wicked. For he speaks of the sacrifice, which those perform in the best opinion and with great earnestness, because it was done with setting aside the word of God. Therefore, stay with the word, so that you do not neglect this and follow your own judgment and fall for the sacrifices of fools, as those have done who have fallen for the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience and other vows, and have set aside the word of God. All of these 1) have taken offense at the beautiful appearance, and their feet have slipped.

Cap. 5, 1. 2. Do not be quick with your mouth, and do not let your heart be hasty to speak anything before God; for God is in heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few. For where there is much sorrow, there come dreams; and where there are many words, there is heard the fool.

This is one part of those who are angry and deviate to the right, who toil too much and ponder over God's counsel, as some say: If we are to do nothing but believe, we will do no works at all. So these say: If our counsels are nothing, what shall we do? Why did God create us like this? Why does he give success to this but not to that? 2c. Therefore Solomon warns us here not to follow such thoughts, nor to follow these disputators, but to stick to the word and do it,

1) So the Wittenbergers: oinnos; Erlangers: üovainsk.

what he prescribes for us here. Therefore, we should not give way to the anxious concern of these people, nor to the carelessness of those people, but remain on the right path and on the middle road.

Before GOD.

That is, in the house of God, in the place where the word is taught, where God is worshipped and preached, you shall not be quick to speak, that is, you shall not be a doctor, and you shall not teach, but be taught. But as soon as the wicked have heard God's word, they immediately bark and grumble against it, some to the left, but others to the right. On the left, the papists argue; on the right, our zealots. Both are quick to speak before God, since they want to establish their teachings as divine. Therefore, do not follow your own words or the words of others, but listen to 2) the Lord, as also Jacobus says [Cap. 3, 1: "Do not forbid anyone to be a teacher." So the meaning is this: be neither your own teacher, nor the teacher of others, but let the word of GOD alone be your teacher. [Matth. 23, 8:] "For one is your Master, Christ", who is in heaven; him you shall hear.

For where there is much worry, there come dreams 2c.

There are two proverbs which he applies to his saying. For it happens that where there are many worries and thoughts during the day, many dreams follow at night, as also the physicians consider. He applies this general saying thus: If thou thinkest anxiously and disputest how things shall be governed, and wilt be troubled and anxious about all things, nothing shall follow but dreams, out of which nothing shall come when thou awakest, that is, finally thou shalt know that it is vain. 1 Tim. 1, 7: "They understand not what they say, or what they set." In such a way, when we and others prescribe many things to men, nothing comes of it; but it is much more so when we prefer our thoughts and counsels to the word of God.

2) Instead of Luäiös in the editions will read Älläitzs Pl.

And where there are many words, there one hears the fool.

That is to say, to argue in many ways, to be too clever, to want to tell everyone what to do, to instruct everyone, indicates a fool. "A fool can be recognized when he wants to be clever. A hasty wisdom and a hastened righteousness never turn out well, as he also said: I hate a child with precocious (*praecoci*) wisdom. Therefore he reminds us that we should not dispute, but listen and do. And this text could be understood in two words: Hear and be silent. For whoever is able to listen, of him we say in a German proverb that he will be wise. But he who wants to be regarded as being able to help things with many words and disputations is a fool and only hinders things more. So these are excellent sayings for the right conduct (*moros*), and which can be said against those who want to bring about nourishment by their conduct, or who want to prescribe a rule for the works of God 2c. So also Jude, v. 8, calls such people "dreamers" who want to help the church without the word.

For God is in heaven, and you on earth.

That is, be mindful of how you are constituted: God is such a great majesty in heaven, but you are a worm on earth. You are not able to speak about divine works according to your judgment, rather let God speak; do not dispute about God's counsel and do not take it into your head to direct things according to your counsel. It is God who is able to direct things and also to carry them out, for He is in heaven. All this we say in German: "Not many words; shut up!" You cannot set GOtte a rule. These therefore sin on the left side, who do not want to hear God's word, but want to help things themselves, yes, teach the Lord what he should do. He rejects them thus: "Listen, be silent and do what God commands and what he puts before your hand; if you do not do this, you will fall into trouble and become a dreamer and a fool.

V. 3. 4. When you make a vow to God, do not try to keep it, for he has no pleasure in fools. What you vow, keep. It is better that you vow nothing, than that you do not keep what you vow.

This passage is very highly raised in the church and under the rule of the papacy, and this is almost the only saying with which they drift on the monastic vows and erect the same. We have written about this matter in more detail elsewhere. We are not disputing whether one should keep vows or not, but whether those are in truth vows, which they boast as such. Jerome and Lyra also agree that a vow must be such that it is possible and brings glory to God. They call a foolish vow such as picking up a straw from the earth, scratching the head with the finger. And Moses enumerates the kinds of vows, and what things may be vowed, namely, a field, a house, food, clothing, one's own body; all these are in our power. Thus the Jews vowed their souls or bodies to the priests, that they would serve them at any and all times. Moreover, Moses has no eternal vow except the one he calls "the vowed" (*anathema*), namely the vow that one would bring it to death, Deut. 27, 28. f., which had to be killed, whether the thing vowed was man or cattle, as Jephthah did. Judg. 11, 30. f. 39. Therefore, if the monks want to assert eternal vows, they would have to be strangled immediately, since they want to defend their vows from Moses. Otherwise, all possible vows are also temporal, so that you can vow the body to the Lord; likewise a field, a meadow, a garment, for some time, 2c. that the priest or the Levite may use it. This way of pledging was very useful for the Levites, so that they could be fed the easier and better, and God made provisions about these things so that He would provide for them in this way.

But our vows are quite foolish, not to mention ungodly, because we vow poverty and obedience, which in the Evan-

gelio are commanded and belong to all Christians. But the vow of perpetual chastity (virginitatis) is an impossible one, therefore these vows are also void according to the judgment of Jerome and Lyræ. Moreover, this passage of Solomon seems to me to clearly concern those who are on the right side, who, having heard that their conduct is of no use, do not want to do anything after that. For a fool thinks like this: If I can do nothing with my cares and my undertakings, I will do nothing; even that which I have vowed I will not keep 2c. Against these despisers he says: Do what God has commanded; I do not make you free from work, but command that you do what God has commanded. But He commands that if you have vowed something, you should keep what you have vowed. Therefore, if you have vowed something and have that with which you can keep it, you must keep it. Summarize all this in this way: Listen, be silent and do what the Lord commands.

For he has no pleasure in fools.

Now he confirms this saying by a divine threat. But he speaks of these fools according to the way of the Scriptures, who despise God's word or do not care about it: "Do not be reprobate, do not cast it to the winds," for you will not remain unpunished, but your certain punishment awaits, as it is wont to come upon those in whom God does not delight and whom he is angry with. For He is also angry with you.

V. 5. 6. Do not let your mouth deceive your flesh, and do not say before the angel, "I am innocent. God may be angry with your voice, and condemn all the works of your hands. Where there are many dreams, there is vanity and many words; but fear God.

This is a confirmation of the same saying, whereby he warns that they should not be obstinate and do nothing, as he warned before, they should not be too anxiously anxious and want to rule everything according to their reason. He says: "Do not speak so carnally, so sacrilegiously, so foolishly, that you listen to your flesh, but speak according to the word of God. Neither say: This

is done out of ignorance or is a minor sin, namely, if I also do not work, if I do not perform what I have vowed, as the careless people who have a wide conscience tend to do with sin, thinking that God does not care about sins, nor does He require good works from us; but you do not excuse it, nor do you disregard it, if you sin. For this is where heresies come from, that they throw the word of God to the wind, and persist in doing so, as if it were not sin; and they are so full of spirit that they think they have no need of the ministry of the word. This certainty or negligence is indicated by the Hebrew word XXXX, which is also in the title of the 7th Psalm and in the title of the hymn Habakkuk [Cap. 3]. For it signifies ignorance, but not such as we call lack of knowledge (inscitiam) 2c., but that which we would more properly call incontinentiam, if this were a Latin word, that is, "If one is not aware of a thing, or has no conscience of it," so that it must be referred not to the angel, but to the one who speaks the words, who thus says: I am not aware of anything evil, God will not punish me.

Before the angel.

For God governed this people through the mediation of angels, as it is said in the letter to the Galatians [Cap. 3, 19.] that the law was given by the angels, through the hand of the mediator. And Moses says to the people [Ex. 23:20], "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared," commanding them the angel as the leader of the people. After this manner Solomon speaks, "Speak not before the angel," 2c. namely, whom GOD has given to be our leader. So "before the angel" is the same as "before God", "God may be angry at your voice" 2c. that is, see to it that you are not a despiser of the vow, and become unhappy in all that you undertake.

Then he closes this whole passage almost in the same way and with the same saying as above [P. 2.]. There are only dreams and vanity 2c. For where there are many sorrows, there follow

many dreams, and where there are many counsels and thoughts, there is much vanity. Therefore fear God, be content with the word, and let him rule according to his counsel. For he is in heaven, thou on earth, as above [v. 1.] Thou shalt work indeed, but let him govern thy works, and expect him to give the prospering. For what do you do with all your words, counsels and thoughts but heartache? For where there are many words, there are also many dreams, and again. This is a generally valid sentence (universalis) simply the other way round: Where many thoughts or considerations are, there are many dreams, and where many dreams are, there are also many words and thoughts.

Therefore, the summa is: Fear God, that is, have reverence for him and hold him high in your heart. Thus Paul commands [Eph. 5:33] the woman to fear the man, that is, to hold him in such esteem that she does not easily commit anything that might offend him. So we too should fear God, that is, hold Him in honor, and not do or commit anything that might anger Him. He wants to say: Do not keep company with those who are too anxious, nor with those who are too casual. Do not be an ungodly reprobate, but neither be a presumptuous counselor and scrutator.

Now here is the end of this teaching and the admonition that one should not get angry in the course of this life. He says: Do not dispute about it, but do not despise it either, but hold God in honor and think that it is God's work 2c. For God does all this so that He may disgrace our counsels and our flesh, and show that He is God 2c. For the flesh either tortures itself too much, or does not take these things into consideration at all. Thus, in the middle of his speech, Solomon is concerned that he should avoid trouble, lest someone take offense at his teaching, and either not take up the matter, or even be presumptuous. Therefore, he exhorts us to keep our vows, to fear the Lord and to keep his commandments.

"Vows," however, is not understood by Scripture to mean ceremonial things alone, but so calls the whole service of God, as it does in the 50th Psalm,

V. 14, means, "Pay your vows to the Most High." Likewise the word when the Jews said [Ex. 19:8], "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do." That was the highest vow. So you, who have promised the Lord that you will do His will, remain firm in this vow, and leave everything else in order, of which God does not want you to investigate or take care. Now he returns to the register of human affairs.

V. 7, 8: If you see the poor wronged and justice and righteousness torn away in the land, do not be surprised at the nobility, for there is still a high guardian over the high, and there are still higher ones over the two. Over this is the king in all the land, to build the field.

After he has spoken of godliness, he returns very finely to the register of vanities, and often repeats the same, as is customary in sermons. He now says: "I have said that you should fear God, for otherwise you will do no good, rather you will say that there is no God, if you are not fortified by the fear of God and the knowledge of the truth, because you will see injustice against the poor, and how justice is perverted. Here you will grumble about how unjust it is and say: Where is God? Why does he suffer this? He strengthens us against these thoughts and grievances. You, he says, fear God, and remember, "It has its judge." If you cannot correct the judge, think that this is the way of the world, and that no one can bring about that all judges are just; that stands alone with God and the highest King.

No one understands this but those who have been in public office. I have seen and experienced in the monastery how many unsuitable people were appointed for the administration of the business or were appointed to the offices, which cannot be changed. Thus our Staupitz, since he wanted and wished to fill all offices with the best people, was still not able to do so. "One must (he said) plow with the horses one has." He who does not have horses must, as the saying goes, plow with oxen. So it goes in the.

human affairs. Sometimes there is a good prince, but he cannot make all the judges better, nor can he make all the praesides and judges good and just, and yet he must have persons in authority. So wise men are anxiously concerned and see to it that the common people are well ordered and obedient, but they grumble and complain about the violence and injustice of the judges 2c.

When you see this, think that this is the vanity of the world, and do not flee from the world into the desert like the monks. For these have done likewise, as when the husbandman, having wild horses, would leave them, when by his stopping and care he should have made them not so wild. Thus, some house fathers are very strict drivers to work, but nevertheless they do nothing but bring everything into confusion by their unreasonableness. It is said that Emperor Frederick the Third used this famous saying: He who cannot overlook cannot govern. To this add this: He who cannot overlook does not know how to live. If you want to live in the world, learn to see this.

Should we do nothing? Not at all. One should be active and work, but what you cannot do, overlook. Thus a wise householder must overlook many things and not want to know what is annoying. For it is not possible for everything to be done right without all injustice. Therefore, this book teaches calmness and peace of heart in the affairs of this life, that when you hear or see evil, you do not become indignant, but say, "This is the accident and the course of this world. "There is no other way here." Again, when thou seest good, thou shalt say, Praise be to God, who so governs affairs that He does not merely cause evil to happen or be done, but adds good to evil. Do what you can; the rest command God and suffer, as the proverb says: "He who cannot lift a heavy stone, let him lie", and let him who can lift this stone. Therefore, if you see evil in princes, that the authorities abuse the authority they have received, that judges pronounce judgment in an ungodly manner,

If the people murmur and the sages dispute, 2c. think: God will correct this.

Do not be surprised at the nobility.

He wants to make our heart still. Do not be surprised, he says, when you see such things, "but be content. You will not improve this, for you can neither help nor advise these things. Therefore fear God and command Him, and you will have peace. He who does not do this has nothing but heartache.

For there is still a high guardian over the high.

That is, do not torment yourself if you cannot change it; leave it to a higher judge. What the inferior cannot do, let him think that it is due to the superior. If a prince is evil, bring it before the highest prince, GOD. So, even if I am in great distress because of the sacramentalists and the rotten spirits who disturb the Church of God and stain the Gospel, what can I do? I bring the matter home to the right judge, God, in whose hands all things stand. Although I am sorry that souls are so miserably deceived and seduced, I can do nothing more than to resist them according to my office and say: "Let go, it is enough of error, turn back. If you have advised another in this way, then command him, according to the words of Paul [Titus 3:10]: "Avoid a heretical man, when he has been admonished once and again" 2c. Likewise [2 Tim. 3, 13.): "With wicked men it becomes the longer the worse", and they will not escape their judge. "Every man has his judge. If the magistrate does not do it, the bailiff or captain does it." If the latter also does not judge, the prince judges. Now if the prince neglects to do it, the emperor will do it; if the emperor neglects to do it, 2) God will not neglect nor neglect to do it. This is it that he says, "Moreover, over these is the king in all the land." Solomon had no higher authority than the king. "Let the king execute" what you cannot.

1) Erlanger: ūoa instead of: die.

2) We have adopted with the original edition and the Jena instead oontellnet in deffWittenberg and in the Erlanger. ..

To build the field.

This seems to be a statement (epithet) about the king's authority, by which it is indicated what kind of office he presides over and what it is that the temporal power has to deal with. For this purpose, he says, the authority is appointed, that it may cultivate the land, that it may avenge the injustice and evil done to the subjects. The king has the sword, so that he may protect the innocent and punish the guilty. For God does not allow any wrongdoing in the country that he does not punish through the authorities. If a lower one does not do it, a higher one does it, that is, the wrongdoer finally comes under the power of the sword. But it is a beautiful thing that the king is called a cultivator of the land, which indicates not only the cultivation of the land, but also the preservation of the whole temporal regime, which is done by laws, courts, and so forth. For it is the duty of a king to both protect and nurture, and to bring about the goods and riches of the people. The cultivation of the land brings about the goods; the warrior state or the sword protects them, keeps harmful people in check, so that the others can build the field and do what they owe. Thus it is up to the king both to acquire goods and to preserve them, for if he does not defend, the others cannot cultivate the land. Thus he strengthens us against the aversions and at the same time teaches that our counsels are vain. I, he says, am king by God's will. Even if I am not able to improve everything, I still do what I can. The other I must suffer, lest the whole land become desolate, and in the meantime I command it to the supreme judge, GOD, who has all the power of the sword. So shall others also do, each in his office, what he is able, and command the rest to the higher power.

V. 9, 10: He who loves money will never be satisfied with it; he who loves riches will have no use for it. This is also vain. For where there is much good, there are many who eat it; and what is he worth who has it, without looking at it with his eyes?

This belongs to what he said in the first chapter [v. 8.]: "The ear never hears enough, and the eye never sees enough." For here the vanity of the heart and of human desires is treated. One world is not enough for Alexander. So it goes in all other affairs, honors, riches 2c. For so it is with the miserable human life that the miser can be an example for all. He has money and yet does not get enough of it; indeed, he does not enjoy the money he has, and only thirsts for other money that is not yet available. What, then, is the miser but a heart that always reaches out for what it does not have and turns away from what it does have? Thus, miserliness is a vanity of the heart. Would it not be better to be content with the present and to throw away the concern for the future? The servants of war are more blessed people than the miser, even though they are full of all vices and shameful deeds and lead a very hard life. For otherwise all men are stingy, except those in whom other equally bad vices stifle this vice of avarice. But only the godly have this grace, that they are content with what they have and use it with thanksgiving and joy. The miser does not have a larger mouth or a larger body than the godly poor man, nor can he digest more, and yet the latter is content with little, indeed he is rich; but the latter, in the midst of riches, is poor and full of greed. This is said and held up in a wholesome and godly way, but the flesh surely despises everything that is said or done.

Where there is much good 2c.

An apt saying. The miser is not satiated, but scrapes together more and more. For whom? The stingy man wants a spendthrift. For though he has an immense amount of money, yet it is consumed, either while he lives, or after he dies, and has nothing of it but trouble and heartache. King Solomon has houses full of gold and silver, but who uses this good? The courtiers. He himself has only clothing and food from it. For who uses in the courts of the goods of the prince?

sten? The horsemen, the scribes, the thrasones and great good-for-nothings. Therefore, the gathering together of wealth is nothing other than gathering together many devourers. Why do you worry so much about gathering everything together? Be content with what you have; but if you gather goods together, they will not be given to you without the devourers, if not in this life, certainly after death. Of all your goods you have nothing but that you fill your mouth and your body and clothe your body. But if wealth comes to you, use your share, let the rest be enjoyed by others, and let the care of gathering and gathering be taken from you. If you do not do this, it will still be so; for here you hear, "where there is much good, there are many who eat it.

And what will be geneu<, who has it 2c.

This is an apt mockery of avarice. It is a saying of Horace: 1)

Congestis undique saccis
Indormis inhians, et tanquam parcere sacris
Cogeris, aut pictis tanquam gaudere tabellis.

He says: Poor among great riches. Solomon has quite the same opinion. The miser has only the good, that he looks at the florins as I look at a painted picture, besides which he has nothing. The miser cannot use money for the purpose for which it was made, namely, to eat, drink, and clothe himself, and with the rest to serve others. For for this purpose wine and grain grow, for this purpose gold and silver 2c. are given to us, so that we may use them in this way. But the flesh does not care for this, but rather despises it and follows its vents. That is why it leads a very miserable life, without rest and peace.

V. 11. To him who labors, sleep is sweet, whether he has eaten little or much; but the abundance of the rich makes him not sleep.

Solomon goes on to condemn wealth, that is, the worries and efforts to gather and maintain riches. For the more riches the miser collects, the more

1) Cf. col. 1446.

more is his heart or his desire provoked. The miser always has more need, and is poor under riches. Yes, avarice is such a monster (says Sallust) that it is diminished neither by abundance nor by want, and as that poet says: 2) *Crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.*

(The love of money increases the more money itself increases).

Among these plagues of the miser, he lists another. Even though the miser satisfies himself, he cannot sleep. Thus the life of the miser is miserable in every way, that he has no rest either by day or by night. But it is so arranged by nature that a body which is moderately refreshed sleeps sweetly and rests. For drunken men neither sleep nor wake; they are neither dead nor alive. And he that laboureth with moderate labour sleepeth lightly and softly, though he have little to eat, as it is said (Ps. 104:23.), "Man goeth to his work until the even." But the stingy delay labor until night, and wear out and break the body. But since the body of the miser is overfilled with food and broken by laborious work, but the spirit with worries, it does not let him sleep.

Since Solomon says: "To him who works", he commands that one works and does not forbid that one acquires wealth. And since he says: "Sweet is sleep", he demands a moderate work, which exercises the body, but does not spoil it. Therefore he demands work, but rejects desire and worry, because the blessing of the Lord makes one rich (Proverbs 10:22). Immeasurably great work does not make rich, as the 127th Psalm, v. 2, says: "It is in vain that you rise up early" 2c., likewise: "To his friends he gives it sleeping." Thus Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon became rich through God's gift and blessing; but they used their riches in such a way that they also helped others with them. Therefore, do not throw away your riches, do not abolish the magisterial offices, as Epicurus taught, do not cast away your wife, do not drive away your servants,

2) 4uv6nat XIV, 139.

but work and suffer. We must be in the midst of people and goods, not casting off worldly affairs from us, but suffering what God lays out for us. Where God has placed you, there you shall remain, only you shall not want to rule things by your own counsel. Everything that does not go out evil to you, consider it profit. For it is so in this life that we must expect evil daily, but the good is there and comes out of our expectation. But when it comes, we should thank God for it as for a special blessing. If you are blessed with a chaste wife and obedient children, you should thank God. If an authority governs the community well and rightly, if a field yields a good return, 2c., consider all this as profit. But if the opposite happens, do not agonize over it too much.

So Solomon does not want to pull us out of worldly affairs, but to bring us into them, so that we should not make of Solomon a Crates or Diogenes, who were foolish despisers of wealth and the world. For it is an ungodly word of the philosophers: xxx β' ^

^αζ [live in seclusion]. For seeing that this world and affairs were not rightly managed, they thought it best to live in seclusion and not to mix in the affairs and public affairs, lest they should be compelled to see and suffer such unjust things. For this saying of Solomon, that one must use things and suffer them, was hidden and unknown to all philosophers. But we, who have Solomon as our teacher, should do what we can, but what we cannot, we should let go.

V. 12, 13: It is an evil plague that I have seen under the sun, to keep wealth to the hurt of him that hath it. For the rich man perishes with great sorrow, and if he has begotten a son, nothing remains in his hand.

This, too, is a very vain plague in human life. It is not an evil that is common to all, but it is nevertheless common, namely, that wealth is kept to the detriment of the one who has it and the one who has received it.

has collected. For Solomon not only complains that there is heartache in such things, but also that such things must be seen in the world, even though he himself is free of them. For how many in our time have been secretly killed in their own homes for the sake of wealth? Did not the Duke of Bavaria in our time have a great quantity of gold, a tower full of gold? But this gold became a cause of war for the duke and a calamity for the whole country. And hardly any prince has left behind great riches without it being used to the detriment of the entire fatherland. Thus Julius Caesar used the money in the treasury at Rome to the ruin of the city. Our bishops have accumulated treasures, but only to the misfortune of serving no one with them; this has incited the peasants. Now they are continuing to gather and to exploit the people, but they will not let up until people come to take it away from them, and they themselves will fall into ruin.

Should we throw away our riches? By no means; rather, they should be brought to us, especially the princes, but in such a way that we ourselves enjoy them and help others. Because this does not happen, God allows the goods in which they trust to ruin those who have them as a punishment. Thus Ezekiel prophesies against the godless and miserly Jews [Cap. 22, 13. ff.] that because they did not reach out to the poor, they would be led away captive and perish with their riches. The same happens to our rich miserly men, the bishops and the despisers of the gospel; because they do not want to let their gold and their riches serve the poor, so the soldiers and the fiscus will come and take away what Christ does not get. 1)

They perish with great lamentation.

He who has wealth suffers great plague; daily he stands in danger, at home from thieves, abroad from robbers; he is caught and killed. The merchants know this little song very well.

1) Cf. Walch, St. Louis ed. vol. XX, 2177, s 50. Ibid, vol. II, 1817, s 88.

And if he has begotten a son, nothing remains in his hand.

The cause is this [Ezek. 16, 49.], because Sodom and Gomorrah have everything in full, but do not help the poor, therefore the Lord turns them back 2c. The miser gathers together, another one will do what is gathered. The miser thinks: my son shall have these goods; but behold, God sends robbers or thieves to rob him of all his goods, so that neither he nor his son will have anything left. Therefore, one should stop with work, but expect the blessing from the Lord, and reach out to the poor, yes, all our work should be like that of the people who sing and work in the harvest, so that in the midst of the work and the sweat we may be joyful, and so minded that we could also lose everything with equanimity, and so think: I will indeed work for myself and my children; if God provides something, let us use it; if anything is left over, then my son shall have it after me; but if nothing is left over, then God will feed him, just as He fed me.

V. 14, 15: As he came naked from his mother's womb, so he goes back as he came, taking nothing of his work in his hand with him when he goes. This is an evil plague, because he goes as he came. What helplessness is there in him, that he has worked in the wind?

This is also in the book of Job in the first chapter, v. 21: "I came naked from my mother's womb" 2c., likewise in Paul 1 Tim. 6, 7: "We have brought nothing into the world, neither shall we bring anything out." Even the richest man can boast of nothing else than that he has eaten and drunk of his goods (inde) as long as he has lived 2c. Since we cannot take anything away with us, we should share it with others, use the wealth as the flowing water, as the air. We should think thus: As I, when I die, must leave my wealth, so will I leave it, while I live. Why, then, should I gather it with so great a care, since we have but a mouthful of it?

can have? I use water in this way: I wash myself, others also wash themselves. "What we do not (need, we let) flow." So we use fire, so we use air. And of wealth thou shalt so use, that thou be but the steward.

What does it help him that he has worked into the wind?

"Working into the wind" is a Hebrew way of speaking that Paul imitated 1 Cor. 9, 26. "I do not fence as he who sweeps into the air." And 1 Cor. 14:9, "Ye shall speak into the wind." But it denotes the same thing as speaking in vain. Thus Solomon says, "The miser hath wrought into the wind," that is, in vain. "It is labor in vain."

V. 16. All his life he ate in darkness, and in great sorrow, and sickness, and grief.

Again, a Hebrew way of saying, "He ate in darkness," instead of: He ate in sadness. But the same is taken from the moods and the face of men. For when the heart is sad, the eyes are, as it were, covered with a cloud; but when it is happy, the countenance is, as it were, illuminated by rays and a new light. This way of speaking is frequent in the Psalms, that light is taken for joy, darkness for sorrow, as Ps. 27, 1: "The Lord is my light and my salvation." Likewise Ps. 13, 4: "Enlighten my eyes" 2c. "To eat in darkness" is therefore to lead a laborious life in sadness. A miserly workman, indeed all miserly men, constantly find something that displeases them, that offends them, because they are full of cares and sorrows. They cannot eat their bread cheerfully; they are always complaining, they always find something in their household that causes them heartache. In this way, only evil troubles are brought to the prince and the authorities; now an incomprehensible authority person tortures himself and consumes himself with worries, because he does not see his efforts and endeavors going well. But a man of understanding says thus: I advise and do as much as I can, but what I cannot improve I suffer and must suffer; meanwhile I leave it to

GÖtte, who alone knows how to improve everything according to his will and to make our advice prosper.

So it is also burdensome for us to hear that among such a large number of preachers there are so few faithful and good ones who have the cause at heart. But what shall we do? Shall we be indignant and consumed with sadness? This will not help us any more. But we command the cause of GÖtte 2c. Therefore we must accustom our ears and eyes to hear and see the evil we do not want. Nor shall we think to see or hear the good that delights us. Such things this world does not bring. He who does not want to be annoyed anywhere will find more things to annoy him than all the people. Therefore we are to be armed against all evil, that we may know that this is the course of this life 2c.

V. 17-19. Therefore I consider it good to eat and drink, and to be of good cheer in all the work that a man does under the sun all the days of his life, which God gives him; for this is his portion. For to whom God gives riches and goods and power, that he may eat and drink of them for his portion, and be merry in his labor; this is the gift of God. For he does not think much of the miserable life, because God delights his heart.

This is the conclusion of this whole book or disputation, which is also set up above in the second and third chapters, and you see

Here, Solomon does not reject goods, nor does he forbid that we acquire goods, or food, or drink, but he calls these gifts of God, so that he may teach us to lay aside our cares, so that we may expect all this from God through faith, and, if God wills, lose it patiently, just as Abraham returned his son to God. Therefore, we should not throw away goods, for they are not given by God for us to throw them away or to abstain from them, but rather to use them and to give them abundantly to the needy. This saying is the right interpretation of this whole book, that Solomon wants to forbid vain cares, so that we may cheerfully enjoy the present, unconcerned about the future, so that we do not let slip the present and the right moment that is given to us. "For this is his portion," 2c., meaning, "This is what he gets out of it." "For he thinks not much of the miserable life," that is, his heart is not troubled with care and sorrow, either for the past or for what is to come.

Because God delights his heart.

Thus he has joy in his work here and enters paradise here in the midst of all evils. On the other hand, the wicked and the miserly and all those who do not use the things of this life according to this example begin to be martyred here and cast down to hell 2c.

1) Wittenberg and Jena: in doe; Erlanger: cheese.

The sixth chapter.

V. 1. 2. It is a calamity that I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men. One to whom God has given riches, goods and honor, and lacks none that his heart desires; and yet God does not give him power to enjoy them, but another consumes them; this is vain, and an evil plague.

Having interposed the teaching or exhortation, he now returns to his register of the various pursuits of human life, in which vanity and misery reign. It seems, however, that what he mentions here of the rich man is the same as what he said before. But he speaks here of

Such a rich man, who has very large estates and servants and lives in good peace, without loss and damage to his goods, and yet in the midst of wealth and the highest honors is afflicted and cannot enjoy it, because either illness intervenes, or because hatred hinders him and the care for the preservation and increase of the goods. Thus he is tormented by the very things he has and becomes unhappy as a result. When a son is born to him, there is a new worry, how he can gather as much as possible for him and leave it to him, especially when he is already grown up; for it is as it is said in the proverb: Small children small worries, big children big worries. The rich collect for their children, they wish to leave them rich behind them, also to get the highest honors for them. For these are the wishes and desires of all men; yet this is quite vain. For what is it when a living man has everything, and yet has no need of any thing, but always postpones it to the future, and he reaches out for what is not there, but misses the present? He therefore describes a rich man who lacks nothing, that he might live well and pleasantly, and does not. Look at many of our noblemen who could live comfortably at home, since they have abundant possessions in their fields. But they are not satisfied, they go to the courts of princes. They expect greater things, but live exceedingly miserably. The same can be seen in rich people and merchants, who, even though they could live in peace at home, travel over land and sea with great danger to their lives and with the loss of their goods. Is this not vain and an evil plague? Therefore also follows:

V.3.4 If he beget an hundred children, and live so long as to survive many years, and his soul be not satisfied with good, and remain without a grave; of him I say that untimely birth is better than he. For in vanity he cometh, and in darkness he departeth, and his name remaineth covered in darkness.

He depicts the misery of the rich miser in a big way. No one, he says, thinks through

Scarcity to make his heirs rich. For wealth is God's gift, not the fruit of our labor. For many labor with great effort to attain riches and yet do not attain them; again, many become rich who have not anxiously sought it, so that you can clearly recognize that riches are God's gift. Nor is it in your power to make this or that heir rich. "It is said that poor people should not be rich." Do what you will, but you will not make rich the one whom God wants to be poor. Then it can also happen that this rich miser does not die in his goods, but is deprived of all 2c.

And would remain without a grave.

He continues to make misery great. That is, he may be expelled from his own, or die elsewhere than in his house.

I speak of him that untimely birth is better than he.

That is, it would be better not to be there than to be so miserable and poor in the greatest goods. This is true, if one leaves godliness aside. For compare the life of a rich and unhappy miser with one who has not yet been born, and you too will judge in the same way. He does not speak after the manner of fools, nor does Solomon assume the person of a fool, as the perverse interpreters (*illi*) say, but here he deals with the life of fools in his outward work. 1) He says that it is indeed better not to be born than to live like this, that is, to have wealth, honor, children, 2) long life, and yet not to enjoy it. In truth, therefore, this is understood of the wretched rich man who has what belongs to a happy life, but whose unhappy mind does not let him use these things. Surely the poor man who bears his fate with equanimity is better off than the rich man. For a wanderer who has nothing can sing even if a robber attacks him. But the rich man fears

1) Wittenberger: corpore instead of: opere. *

2) Erlanger: lidros instead of: lidoros.

The world is governed by opinions and is quite poor in the highest well-being. Quite rightly one says therefore: The world is governed by opinions. God governs with things, we toil with opinions and lose the things themselves, like the well-known dog in Aesop.

For in vanity he comes, and in darkness he goes.

That means, naked, empty, poor he comes into the world. This is how he lives, this is how he dies, because he does not enjoy things, because he only strives for the future and struggles with it. But this is nothing else than having nothing, being empty and poor.

And his name remains covered in darkness.

That is to say, he does nothing worthy of remembrance, not even with his family. The only thing that can be said about him is that he has lived neither for himself nor for others. A wretched man, whom no one would like to emulate!

V. 5: He does not enjoy the sun and knows no rest here or there.

It is a Hebrew way of speaking [in the Vulgate]: "Not seeing the sun", for: enjoying and rejoicing in things, because this bodily life has the sun, as it were, as an exceedingly holy God-power (numen), which is most necessary for mortals; without it everything appears and is sad, as also Christ says [Joh. 12, 35]: "He who walks in darkness does not know where he is going", but [Joh. 11, 9]: "He who walks by day does not stumble, for he sees the light of this world" 2c. It is therefore something exceedingly lovely that the sun shines. But the miser does not look at the light, he does not look at the sun, that is, he does not consider how good the light is; but he also does not see any creature, so that he may enjoy it and use it properly. For with him all contemplation of the benefits and creatures of God 1) perishes before his desires. He never sees how glorious a gift the daily rising sun is. He thinks

nothing, admires nothing, seeks nothing but money. Thus, an ambitious man looks at nothing but honor. A wooer does not look at his wife, but always at a foreign one. That is, the present good creatures 2) do not enjoy her. Thus the wicked prepare for themselves the beginning of hell in this life, because 3) they deprive themselves of the custom of all creatures and gifts of God, so that they never see the sun, which we have daily 2c., that is, they do not enjoy the gifts of God, they always look at something else.

V. 6. Even if he lived two thousand years, he would never have good courage; would it not all come to one place?

See how great he makes the misery of the miser. That is, nothing else will happen to such a person than that the more his life is prolonged, the more his misery and heartache will be increased and prolonged. This is human life, nothing but vanity and misery, which you both experience yourself and see in others. For even the saints, though they do not live according to the flesh, are plagued by the flesh and must feel the vanity of the flesh.

Doesn't it all come in one place?

He repeats what he said above in the first chapter, v. 5: "The sun rises and sets, and returns to its place, so that it rises there again. [All waters flow again to the place whence they came." [v. 4. 1 "One generation perishes, another comes" 2c. "All things pass away from their place of origin," all things perish at last. Human life, kingdoms, and all that men have, return whence they came, from the earth to the earth, as the wind blows and blows back again, and as the sun runs back again to the place of its beginning. So Solomon wants us to stop worrying and anxiously striving for what is to come and for the provision of grids, but to enjoy what is already there. Therefore he continues:

2) Wittenberger: donis ob creaturis.

3) Instead of Hira in the editions, ^uia should probably be read.

1) Erlanger: ereaturarmia rerum instead of: erealnrrarin.

V. 7: To every man work is laid up according to his measure, but the heart cannot keep at it.

In Hebrew it is said: All the work of man is according to his mouth, according to the manner of speaking peculiar to them. So Moses uses this word "mouth" for measure or part of Joseph, Gen. 47, 12: "He fed them and all his father's house, and gave every man his food", where it is said in Hebrew: "And feeding them after their mouth, he fed them, that is, he fed all his father's house after the manner of little children, to whom food is given even without their working. And Exodus 12:4: According to the mouths of the people of every house (singulorum) ye shall eat the passover, that is, according to the number (mensuram) of them that can eat out a lamb. So also here Solomon says that the work of all men is according to their mouth, that is, "according to their measure" or according to their allotted portion, that is, every man has his appointed work. God has assigned to every man his work according to his strength, according to his profession. This is what we say in German: "Je Jeder hat seinen bescheiden Theil." (Everyone has his modest share.) To each one God has measured out his portion. A child is to work in a different way than a man, a person in authority differently than a private man; he wants to occupy you as a child with childish tasks or work, but a prince with heavy and great ones. Hence also the common saying: Depending on the person is, one measures him also the apron coat.

So he calls us back from the worries about other things, to what is incumbent upon us. He does not forbid to work, yes, he declares that one should work, but he wants you to cheerfully do your business, according to the task given to you, and leave strange things to others. And he wants us to enjoy the good life, but in God, so that we do not revel with the wicked when the good life is there, nor grieve over it when it is not there, but bear it with equanimity. He says: "Be happy in heart and hard-working in body, but in such a way that you remain in the part that is given to you, not as an envious person who follows strange things. A

The merchant praises the life of a man of war, a man of war enumerates his accidents and hardships and praises the merchant status, the old men the youthful age. From our very great comforts we turn our eyes away, and with great lamentation we aspire to foreign things. No one can look at his good properly, nor be satisfied with his fate; if he looked at it properly, he would not strive so much for foreign things. For if the old people saw the dangers of youth, they would not wish to be young, and again the young, seeing so many troubles of old age, would gladly bear their own troubles and not be envious if old age has some good things ahead. 2c.

But we do not do that. We always look at what is foreign and despise what is ours. Thus the rich miser looks at what he does not have and covets it; what he has he does not respect. For "the heart cannot hold on," that is, it does not hold on to what it has. No one is satisfied with his lot. He who is entitled to the game always lets himself think that he would play better. When I hear another preach, I think that I could beat him in many respects. Likewise a servant thinks: If I were king, I would rule everything most wisely. So he says in Terence: I should be king! Now if he were commanded the kingdom, no greater fool could be found than he. "But it is said: God give the ride to him, 1) who does it better than he can." But the heart neglects its work, and is exceedingly busy in strange things, therefore man does neither rightly. For he who does not take care of his own will take very bad care of foreign things. God has given me work to do, so that I should not be idle, but behold, I forsake my work and trouble myself with other people's work. This is indeed the same as what he said above [Cap. 1, 8]: "The eye never sees its fill" 2c. In the same way, the heart or soul is not satisfied with desire, but is always inconstant and wanders.

V. 8: For what does a wise man do better than a fool? What dare the poor man be among the living?

That is to say, both the wise and the fools are plagued by the desire for work that lies outside their own appointed portion, and in this the wise are no different from the fools. For both desire immoderate things, and both are carried away by the desire for other things. By "wise men," however, he understands not those who are wise in truth, but those who are wise according to their spiritual dispositions (ψυχικῶς). By "fools," however, he understands the ungodly, "the loose, nefarious, impudent people." Both, he says, have their Reasonable Work, except which they will accomplish nothing. "One will get as far as the other." Another may think or say that if he were in the magistracy he would accomplish much, but if he were a magistrate he would accomplish no more than he who now pronounces and sentences. The same is what follows:

What does the poor man 2c. dare to do?

By "the living" he understands here as above [Cap. 4, 15.] not only those who have life, but those who enjoy life, that is, live well and pleasantly. He therefore says: It is foolish that private people want to dictate to others how they should order and carry out everything, by letting themselves dream that they would take care of everything better, because nothing else happens than how it should go.

V. 9: It is better to use the present good than to think of others. This is also vanity and misery.

This whole 1) is a Hebrew way of speaking that is quite 2) unusual to us. The Hebrew word actually means a mirror, that is, a thing that presents itself to the eyes or is under the sight of the eyes. For so it is said 2 Mos. 38, 8.: "And made the handstand of brass, and his foot also of brass; against the women (de speculis mu-

Around) who served at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." This should have been translated this way: He also made a handbasket 2c. under the sight of the armies that did war service at the door of the tabernacle of the testimony. For this people had women who had made vows (votarias), who stopped with prayers and petitions, and served God, and did military service day and night, as 1 Sam. 2, 22. and Luc. 2, 37. is written of Hannah that she practiced knighthood (militasse). Of this knighthood the women were called "an army of the Lord", which did military service at the door of the tabernacle of the testimony. Afterwards, however, in the course of time, this service fell away and, as Jude [vv. 16, 18] says, was turned into fornication. Thus it is said of Jacob's wife Rachel [Gen. 29:17]: She was beautiful to the mirror, that is, of reputation, "she was beautiful to look upon.

So the meaning is: It is better to enjoy what is present before the sight under the eyes, than that the soul wanders, that is, use what is present and do not wander by desire, as the dog in Aesop desires the shadow, but loses the present flesh. That which the Lord has set before thee, as it were, use, and be satisfied, and follow not thy soul, which is not satisfied, as he also said before. Therefore, by "sight of the eyes" do not understand the sight which the eyes do, but which they have of things, so that the sight is [not an active but] a suffering one, that is, that which is given to you in the presence, use that. Thus it is said of God, Gen. 1:31: "God looked upon all that he had made," 2c., that is, he rejoiced in his works, he held fast to them, he sees them, they please him, they are very good.

Thus he who is godly also holds fast to what is his, and he likes what God has given him and allotted to him in the present. The wicked, however, does not do so, but everything he sees is a torment to him, because he does not use it as a mirror, but wanders about with his soul. When he has money, he does not take pleasure in it; he does not enjoy it, but always desires something else; he takes a wife, he

1) In Latin, the text reads: est asps-
etus oculorum, Huain animam - The sight of the eyes is better than
the wandering of the soul.

2) Erlanger: omnidus instead of: omnino.

desires another; he overcomes a kingdom and is not satisfied with one. Alexander looks out for another world and desires it. But all things should be a mirror for us, that we may delight in them, that we may fix our eyes and our gaze on them, enjoy them and thank God for them. Therefore, he forbids the soul to wander (ambulare, as it is called in Hebrew), that is, to wander about in thoughts and empty opinions of things, so that the essence of this passage is: Use the present and do not wander about with your desires. For this is vain, that the soul should wander.

V. 10, 11: What if a man is highly famous, but it is known that he is a man, and he cannot quarrel with that which is too powerful for him? For it is too much of a vain thing; what has a man more of it?

This can be understood sufficiently from the preceding. For we have said above [Cap. 1, 9.] of this way of speaking, "What is it that is?" 2c. In all words are Hebrew expressions, which we in German would give thus: "As it has gone, so it still goes, and as it goes, so it will go," that is, always men will be quite vain, since they desire vain things and look for them, for it is outside the word of GOD and their work assigned to them. For they do not hear the counsel of God. God has circumscribed and preordained all people with a certain limit, when they should be born, when they should die, by what name they should be called and what office they should hold, and after we are born, He offers us the present things so that we may use them. But men are not satisfied with the decree and counsel of God, and choose and desire other things, but in vain. For God alone directs what he thinks. Hence the meaning:

What is it that is there?

That is, what is the man who is already alive, or others who will be born after him? since the man is already set, what is

and what name he will acquire. But by "name" you must understand the name that will be attached to him according to his deeds, and which will be generally spread over this man, as that Caesar will be called a victor, Catilina a traitor to the fatherland 2c. These, I say, are the names determined beforehand and named beforehand by God before we are born. So also it is determined that this one shall become a cobbler, this one a priest, another one a preacher 2c. Now when all these offices and names have been determined and decided beforehand, what then does man wander about with his opinions, undertaking many things and desiring excessively? What does he go beyond the measure prescribed for him? For he accomplishes nothing other than to cause himself more heartache.

For he cannot quarrel with that which is too powerful for him.

That is, with a thing that is too high for him, because: Everything exists according to a certain law. 1) The pagans also saw that things were not carried out according to the advice of wise people, but attributed this to fate or also to your luck, not to God. So also Solomon looks here at the course of the things, "as it happens in the world". There he sees that people cannot accomplish nor achieve what they desire and undertake. The cause of this is that the things themselves resist them; they do not want to submit to our counsels and let themselves be governed by them, so that if someone wants to quarrel and tear through and enforce his counsels so that what he has in mind comes to pass, he accomplishes nothing; the thing resists him, and God hinders him. In vain, therefore, do we lodge against the thorn, just as if someone were trying to break through a wall with his head. For that which is too mighty and too high for him resists his counsel. Thus Antony wanted to tear through it, since he wanted to go to Italy and make his two sons kings, the

1) Osrtā stnrt omnia IsZs (Virgil). Cf. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XVIII, 1694.

2) quis is missing in the Erlanger.

one about the Orient, the other about the Occident, but he failed. Look at the thoughts of Caesar, how far he failed; even the pope did not go beyond his plan. For their name was named and determined; they went beyond the measure set for them. Therefore they fought against that which was too powerful for them, and thereby obtained nothing but suffering and fear and misfortune.

Since you now see that everything is ordered by a certain law, both your name and your office, but, nevertheless not satisfied with it, act against it and resist it, you swim against the current and yet accomplish nothing, however much you may wisely advise 1) and do; only you will cause many words: "Nothing more comes of it than that one speaks of it. Thus Plato wrote many things, likewise Aristotle many things, how one must govern a state, and of civil manners 2c. But they are only words and remain words, on which nothing follows. Afterwards, when they saw that it had no progress, they wished to help things with other and new counsels and laws, saying: Oh, that we had acted thus, for they were wise, since it was too late (post factum). Therefore, both the histories of the Gentiles and of the Jews teach that, apart from the work assigned, nothing can be done by anyone, whether he is wise or foolish. Only that the histories of the Jews happened in the word of God and teach us that everything happens according to the decree of God, and for this reason it is safer that we keep to them; otherwise the histories of the Gentiles are just as wonderful and great, but they happened outside the word of God.

Cap. 7, 1. For who knows what is useful to a man in life, as long as he lives in his vanity?

Which passes away like a shadow? Or who will tell man what will come after him under the sun?

That is, no man knows what is good for him in life; they do not know how to enjoy things, they do not know how to have a calm heart. The aspirations of men are many; one seeks dominion, another wealth, and yet they do not know whether they will attain it; they enjoy neither the present nor the future. They desire only the good they do not have and do not see. This is a general saying in which all men are resolved. No one knows what he brings about about himself. Thus Cicero and Demosthenes, although they had written much about the state and wanted to help it with their advice, ruled it most unhappily. Similarly, the monks and the papists want to rule the world, and behold, they seduce it and plunge it into the gravest dangers and the deepest darkness.

Or who will tell man what will come after him? 2c.

He does not speak of what will happen after this life, but what will come after the present hour, and after we have made use of the present things. Nobody knows what will happen, whether Antonius will stay alive, whether Brutus and Cassius will win. Since Julius [Caesar] already had the success from his side, he was anxious to order the rule, but he perished just when he was dealing with it. Why then do we trouble ourselves so with thoughts, since the future is not in our power at any moment? Therefore, we should be content with the present, and entrust ourselves into the hand of God, who alone knows and governs the past and the future.

1) Erlanger: eonsoleris instead of: eonsnlueris, which the Wittenberger correctly offers. Jenaer: eonsulerig.

The seventh chapter.

V. 2. 3. A good rumor is better than good ointment; and the day of death, neither the day of birth. It is better to go to the house of lamentation than to go to the house of drunkenness; in the latter is the end of all men, and the living takes it to heart.

This passage seems difficult because of our ignorance of the Hebrew language, which has its hidden speeches (schemata) that can only be understood from the use of language, and it seems unrelated to the preceding. To me, this seems to be the short epitome of this passage, that Solomon wants to comfort those who are impatient because of these vain pursuits, as he used to interject so far, after enumerating a considerable register of human vanities, a consolation and an exhortation to the fear of God, so that our heart may rise to God, that we may hear God's word, not be quick to speak 2c. So here again he inserts 1) an exhortation after he has finished the register; afterwards he will return 1) to the same.

This passage, then, is meant to be an exhortation or a consolation inserted into the register of vain pursuits and desires, for those who are impatient about them. For in this life the human heart experiences nothing but impulses and unpleasant things (impatientiam), but especially those who are the best of men, for, as he said above [Cap. 1, 18.], "He who must teach much must suffer much." He who sees and hears much has great cause to grieve and mourn, for 2) he sees and experiences that by which the heart is grieved. 3) an enemy of the human race, since he received nothing but hatred and persecution as a reward for the many and great good deeds he had done his fellow citizens. So it could be even now

1) iterui is missing in the Erlanger.

2) Erlanger: Hui instead of:

3) Ipiantüropos is missing in the Erlanger.

A person can do this if he has nothing but the greatest ingratitude from all his work. For his courage falls away, so that he will no longer want to do anything. This is what Solomon says about the best people who like to advise people's affairs, not about fools who do not care about wisdom and people's affairs, namely, he says about people who are in public office and have to work in the household. For those who hold a public office or rule a house experience the deceitfulness and disloyalty of men. This circumstance has deterred many from public offices. Thus the old man in Terence considers it fortunate that he has not taken a wife; on the other hand another says: "I have taken a wife, ah, what misery I have had to see; children are born, new sorrows have come 2c. The human mind takes offense at all these things if it is not fortified against them beforehand by the word of God. Therefore, the people who have seen such things direct their admonition thus: He who remains hidden has a good life. But Christians must be admonished to live in the midst of the multitude, to take a wife, to rule their household 2c. But if their conduct is hindered by the wickedness of men, it must be borne patiently, and one must not desist from good works. Do not leave the battle line, but persevere; do not be wearied by arduousness or impatience, nor be overcome by anger. So this is an exceedingly sweet and very good exhortation, but no one hears it but a Christian.

He now begins this consolation with a proverb, 4) saying:

A good rumor is better 2c.

And this he does according to his custom, for Solomon is full of proverbs. He

4> Wittenberg and Erlangen: provrsbiis stätt: Mkvsrdio. 's/-/'

But I will say this: I have already listed such great evils of human vanity that someone could despair and wish rather to be dead than to see and suffer so much misery and vanity, or completely throw away all effort and work and do nothing. But not so; do not stand still, but persevere. Do not be such a person who will have no good name or reputation. Be careful that you gain a good reputation and remain in the work assigned to you, whether in the worldly regiment or in trade. See what a lazy life those lead who live for themselves. Therefore, do not let adversity wear you down, but persevere against these evils. For it is better that thou prove thyself a man, and become a great man, an example to others, and a benefit to thyself, than that thou shouldst snore and be slothful, and be of no use to any man. For a good name is not given to the snoring and sluggish who lose heart, but to the brave and active "who are undaunted and persevere. In order that he might be said to have fled from the world, St. Jerome fled from Rome and the great crowd, and came to Bethlehem to live there in seclusion, and yet he wanted to have a name. But his heart was not firm enough, for he was very impatient and nothing less than a manly heart. Therefore he says:

A good rumor (nomen) is better than good ointment.

The name (nomen) denotes at this point again the rumor. And this proverb must be understood according to the Jewish conditions. For in this kingdom alone grows the balm, the most delicious ointment. But the ointments in this people were counted among the greatest treasures of this kingdom, as one can see in the books of the kings. Therefore, this saying was very appropriate among the Jews, but not equally among others, where perhaps precious stones are more valuable. The image is therefore this: As a delicious smell delights the nose, so a good name delights the spiritual sense of smell. Paul uses this image often. 2 Cor. 2, 15. he says: "We are a good smell of Christ" 2c. For

Paul was a good teacher and right preacher and blameless in his conduct.

Therefore, the meaning of this passage is: Do not let wrath make you disobedient. As I have taught you to stand in fear of God, so I teach you to persevere toward men and to do good works. For what is it if some take offense and are spiteful against your works? Just persevere, and the divine smell, the good rumor you get from it, will attract more people, who will also be kept at work.

The day of death is better, neither the day of birth.

This too, I believe, is spoken literally. But it seems to be pagan and carnal to say that one prefers death to life. But he does not speak of death and life as such, but of what must be done and has been done, even by the cleverest people. Bring me a man who is in the secular or domestic government, who has to deal with things, and let him say whether one should not rather be dead than live in so many dangers and hardships. So Solomon compares this life with himself, not with the life to come, and wants to say: If one wants to look at this life, it is certainly true that the day of death is better than the day of birth. For how can it be worse than that those who have to deal with affairs, and wish with all their heart that everything should go well in the community, and do and suffer everything for the sake of it, have nothing from it afterwards but the highest ingratitude, contempt, harm and banishment?

So the text is to be understood simply as it reads, that it does not speak of divine works and the life after this life, but of human affairs as they are in our use and under our direction, of which we have nothing but cause for anger and impatience. For the day of birth will entangle you in these evils, death will snatch you out of them. Birth is indeed something good and God's creation; but Solomon does not speak of this, but of the use of birth, because

There is a difference between birth 1) as it is created by God and how I use it. We have nothing but sorrows from birth. Of course, this is not the fault of birth, but ours, and the wickedness of the world is to blame, since we misuse God's creatures. So life, as it was created by God, has nothing to do with this book; for it would be quite ungodly to say of this (life) that death is better than this, since God created us human beings and wants us to live. So it is an exhortation that we should not despair, but have an unbroken courage to endure these ills, as if to say: Suffer, bear; do not give way to adversity, but face it with confidence.

It is better to go to the house of complaint than to go to the house of drink; in that is the end of all men.

This is spoken after the manner of a saying. For from these two proverbs he has spun aphorisms and admonitions. A Thor would say the opposite: Do not be burdened with grief and do not lead a miserable life (as Jerome taught that one should lead a marriageless life, that is, a pleasant life). But Solomon says quite differently that one should bear the cross, and that it is better to go to a house of lamentation, because in such a house one sees what is the end of all men and of the whole world. It is true that everything is full of troubles and sorrow in the world and house regiment, but it is better to carry this cross than to flee. For he who moves in sorrow and where death proves its dominion (in mortificatione) also accustoms himself to die; he becomes full of life and dies without heartache. But he who is not accustomed to it, but always wants to live in joys without cross, his heart is not exercised, and he dies with the greatest sadness, and is in perils with the greatest complaint; but he who remains in the midst of affairs, he is exercised and hardened da-

through that he carries them. "There becomes a man." So he says: "Although a fool desires and does the opposite of this, do not let go of the reins. "Let it please thee that thou hast more displeasure than pleasure." It is better to endure evil than to yield to it. For by enduring the evils you will get your good name over, and it will be said of you, "This is a brave man who has endured in the midst of evils; he has been able to overcome all these attempts and wickednesses of the world and of Satan. For in the midst of these evils man learns to despise evils, as Ovid says: Quod male fers assuesce, feres bene (Get used to what you bear evil, so you will bear it well), as that woman did not die by drinking the poison because she was used to it, and as the proverb says: Known evils are the best. Therefore, we do not have to flee so much from the evils, nor to be afraid of them, since we know that this is the end of all men, namely hatred, slander, misfortune and death. If you want to tear through these, you must learn them by constant use. For fools, this difficulty always comes at an inopportune time, but for the godly it is overcome by long habit, since this life is little to them, but death is sweet, and what they live, they live only for the sake of God, who wants them to live this way.

And the living one takes it to heart.

"The living one," that is, one who is well fed and lives pleasantly. The Hebrews generally call the natural life "the soul", but a pleasant life or the ordinary life they call "being alive" (vivere). He beautifully explains what the experience of evils accomplishes, namely, that the pleasantly living person takes it to heart, that is, is forced to let his heart be instructed by those evils. But he who does not want to bear the adversities learns nothing and remains a fool all the time!

V. 4. It is better to mourn than to laugh, for through mourning the heart is improved.

This has the same opinion as the preceding. But how does this agree with what he said above [Cap. 2, 24. 3, 22. 5, 17,]

1) The words: DiNeruM nativitag are missing from the Erlanger.

one should not be angry, but be joyful in all work, but here he says [in the Vulgate]: It is anger (*ira*) better than laughter? I answer, He speaks rather of sadness, and not of wrath; not of the foolish sadness which men invent for themselves, but as he speaks of the house of mourning, so he speaks also of wrath, so that "wrath" is sadness, or a grievousness which brings with it a certain sadness, as when thy David was told that all the king's sons were slain, the king became full of mourning [2 Sam. 13:21.]. It is the same expression there ["he became very angry"] as here in this passage; but there it certainly cannot mean "wrath," but sadness, so that it is the same with what we say in German: "He became frightened, and was greatly distressed." But repugnance expresses itself in the countenances and makes the countenance sad. Thus, if someone is in the world or in the house regiment, "his laughter is well spent," if he is only a good man, and if he performs his office rightly. Then such a great number of troubles will overwhelm him that he can say: "The devil be a mayor or a regent, it is all vexation and unpleasantness" in the worldly government and in the household. Such troubles wrinkle the foreheads of those who desire to advise things, so that they think, "Go away, leave off, for you are doing nothing but complaining with displeasure and hatred. Solomon resists this, advises and admonishes: "Do not turn away, but wait for him. It is better for thee to mourn or to be sad, "that thou shouldest forbear laughter," that thou shouldest have earnestness in thy countenance and in thy actions, and that thou shouldest be compelled to show it (that is, from trouble), than that thou shouldest laugh. The cause is:

The heart is improved through mourning.

This can be understood in two ways. First, by mourning (*per tristitiam vultus* by sad appearance of the face) the heart is improved, namely, others. Thus Paul requires in a bishop [2 Tim. 3. 4.] an honorable character (*σεμνότης*), a seriousness in his manners and walk, lest he offend others by levity 2c.

Solomon also wants him who has a governmental office to be cheerful in heart but outwardly serious, so that others may be corrected. For if a man is of such a nature that he has a merry heart and a serious countenance, and is not frivolous in dress and deportment, others will hold him in honor, and his household will not be unruly. Second, it can be interpreted this way: With a wicked appearance it is well with the heart, that is, there is nothing to prevent the heart from being cheerful, even if the countenance is outwardly serious, so that the meaning is: it is better to lead a stern and serious life than a licentious one. For "laughter" is what the Hebrews call a way of life such as is found among our papists, who live quite licentiously, despising and laughing at all good things. And this conception pleases me better than the one according to which one thinks that the heart of the fool or the godless can be improved by someone's sadness or seriousness. It may seem that an ungodly person honors the seriousness of another, but his heart does not change.

I therefore take this view, that you understand it from your heart, that the heart becomes good when things are bad. For it is a Hebrew way of speaking, "a good heart," that is, a contented and cheerful heart. And Solomon speaks in this way in order to direct the listener toward his goal, which he has in mind. For this is what he has been after, that he would teach that we should be cheerful, however the matter may turn out. But since he said above that it is good to be cheerful, here he seems to assert the opposite: "It is better to mourn than to laugh." This certainly does not seem to be true, but things pertaining to godliness are difficult, and are always pulled to the opposite side. When we teach that nothing justifies but faith alone, the ungodly set aside all works. Again, when we teach that faith must be evidenced by works, they immediately attach justification to them. A fool always deviates either to one side or to the other. It is so difficult to remain on the middle path; so also here, because he does not want to

The heart must be happy, free, and calm, so that it will behave evenly in human affairs, regardless of whether they are happy or sad. The heart should be cheerful, free, and calm, so that it will behave evenly in human affairs, whether cheerful or sad. Therefore he says:

For through mourning (In malo vel malitia vultus) the heart is improved.

As if he wanted to say: I distinguish between sadness of face and sadness of heart. I want to be always cheerful on the inside; this cannot happen on the outside, because sad things happen, as the apostle says in 2 Cor. 6:10: "As those who mourn, but always rejoice," 2c. so that one must refer to the outside, the other to the inside.

V. 5. The heart of the wise is in the house of lamentation, and the heart of fools in the house of pleasures.

All this would seem to be in conflict with the foregoing, if we did not distinguish between the joy of the heart and the outward joy, and likewise the inward sorrow and the outward sorrow. So he continues with comforting and admonishing, saying: "Do not follow those fools who change their hearts as outward things change, and cling to such things with their hearts; they are joyful when joyful things come, but sad when sad things come.

In the complaint house.

The Hebrews call a house not only a building of stone and wood, but everything where anything is done. Thus, among their grammarians, any letter is the house of the words that begin with that letter. But why is the heart of the wise in the house of lamentation? Because when things are bad, the wise do not become disgruntled, nor do they change, as things change. Fools chase after happy outward things and flee repulsiveness. This is a very troublesome kind of people, who begin many things with eagerness and great impetuosity, but after that, if even a small difficulty intervenes, they immediately desist. If they succeed, they penetrate strongly, but if they do not succeed

If they are not in a good position, they lose heart and flee from the line of battle. Therefore, they are not fit to govern, neither in public nor in private life, since one cannot live in any state without inconveniences and troubles. A brave courage, however, or the heart of the wise man endures the adversity and pulls through. Significantly, he says: "the heart of the wise" and "the heart of fools. For he judges according to the attitude, not according to the things themselves. The fool's heart always looks for happy things, the wise man's heart for sad things, 1) although the former is often happy, the latter sad. Therefore, these are the strengthening and exhortations for good people.

V. 6. 7. It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than to hear the song of fools. For the laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under pots; and that also is vain.

In an excellent image he calls the opinions of the fools a "song". It does not have to be transferred or understood from music, just as the preceding does not have to be understood from external drinking, but according to the Hebrew way and figurative speech from the whole change in this life. And "the rebuke" are the teachings and admonitions concerning the passing away in all kinds of things. So he says: Even if you see that it is of no use to you, you must still do what is in front of your hands and not cease from reproving, even if the fools do not hear. This is what Paul said in 2 Tim. 4:2: "Punish, admonish, stop, whether in season or out of season." I have taught and teach that things are vain and are not directed by our counsels 2c. When a fool hears this ringing, he falls on the opposite side and says, "Shall we do nothing? But therefore we shall not cease, neither from our activity, nor from the reproach of the vain, nor from teaching and preaching, however much we see them despised, but we must go through and punish the wicked. When I speak of

1) Erlanger: tristitiam instead of tristia.!

If I had to refrain from the ministry of the word, because I see the fruit of the word only in very few, but an exceedingly great perversity of almost the whole world, and the highest ingratitude, I would have had to keep silent long ago. But God is well advised not to let us see this until we are already in the middle of the course, where one may not turn back, and it is much better to be plagued by these evils than to desist. Therefore, it is better to hear the scolding of the wise men who want us to be well advised.

For hear the song of fools.

That is, what the flesh likes to hear and what is pleasing to them. For they require only that we should speak what is pleasing to them. So Solomon, to put it briefly, says that we should not snore on account of the previous teaching, and that we should not cease from the work.

For the laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under pots.

"Laughter" denotes the whole life of fools, which delights them, but it is only an outward larva of mirth, not a true joy of the heart. But it is a strange similitude: the laughter of the fools and the crashing of the thorns. But the Jews have very many similes, which they take from their things. For they had much to cook and fire to maintain because of the constant washings, sacrifices etc.. Because their priests were right butchers and 1) cooks. Hence the proverb of the crackling of thorns in the fire originated, here and in the Psalms. This seems hard to us, because it is not according to our custom, as also our proverbs would seem hard to them, as when we say: "Copper money, copper soul measurement, 2) although it is common with us and taken from our services; but they would not understand this at all.

Therefore, almost this whole passage is, as it were, a figurative speech, which is taken from the fire of the thorn bushes (these are thorns, which

have intertwined with each other). This is a sudden and very crashing fire, but powerless; there is more flame than fire; it threatens a terrible fire, but soon, when the flame and the crashing cease, the fire is extinguished. Thus it is said in the 118th Psalm, v. 12. "They are extinguished 3) like fire in thorns." And Virgil, in the third book *ber Georgica* [v. 99 sq.], says: *Ut quondam in stipulis magnus sine viribus ignis, furit incassum* (as at times a great fire rages in vain in the stubble without power). Now such a fire of thorns or briars does not make warm, it does not penetrate, and yet it has a greater reputation than that of glowing coals, which has not much flame, but still gives a very great heat. Thus the merriment of fools has the appearance of lasting forever, and it is thought that there is as much power as there are flames, but nothing less than that. For for a moment they are cheerful, but soon adversities come and they are thrown to the ground and all lies down in despair. So, I think, be the meaning clear, and agree well with the foregoing and the following. This also is vain, because after the end of cheerfulness, unhappiness remains in the heart. For so it is with all carnal cheerfulness, it has an end in unrest and leaves behind evil stings.

V. 8 A contumacious man makes a wise man unwilling and corrupts a gentle heart.

This also belongs to the consolation. But this is said in such a way that it is admitted (*per concessionem*), that is, it would be possible for a contumacious person to make a wise man restless and unwilling, and to corrupt a heart of giving (for so it is in Hebrew), that is, a mild and generous heart. For when the wise man wants to help the world and advise things, and has done everything in the most right way, he is nevertheless defiled by fools and experiences the highest ingratitude. The histories of both the pagans and the Jews testify to this, as does daily experience. Thus Antiochus ignominiously killed a man who had

1) Erlanger: st", instead of: st.
2) That is, like money, like soul mass.

3) Thus Luther translates in his first translation of the Psalms. Cf. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. IV, 101.

He had earned great merit after his two children had been killed before his eyes. This was the thanks for his merits. Belisar, a very good and wise man, was killed by the emperor Justinian in a very unjust way. Such examples are all full.

Therefore, whoever wants to serve in public life or in the household must expect to lose his good deeds, just as God loses the good deeds of the sun and all His gifts to ungrateful and ungodly people, Matth. 5:45. Thus, malice corrupts a mild heart, so that a person, out of impatience, thinks to desist from his actions and allows himself to be made unwilling through ingratitude, unless the heart is instructed by the word of God. This is also what happens to wise people, as Jerome says: "When patience is violated too often, anger arises. And man cannot do otherwise, but God can. 1) God has given the sun, kingdoms, principalities 2c. to the wicked. What do they do? What do they give him in return? They crucify his son. This is the thanks. He can suffer this, men cannot, but what Solomon says here happens to them: Wickedness makes the wise unwilling and corrupts a mild heart. But thou let not evil overcome thee, but persevere. For:

V. 9. The end of a thing is better than its beginning.

That is, perseverance brings the crown, expect the end. "It is not in the lifting up, but in the carrying out." It is far better to have reached the end than to have undertaken the beginning. For before his last day thou shalt praise no man; not he that began, but "he that persevereth shall be saved" [Matt. 10:22.]. What I say of the things of godliness must also be said of all other things, as the common proverb says: *Principium fervet, medium tepet, finis abhorret* [in the beginning heat, in the middle lukewarmness, in the end abhorrence. "So it lies even 2) in the ashes."

1) The words: *veus vsro xotest* are missing in the Erlanger. /

2) "gar" *^*ehlt in der Wittenberger.

Especially we Germans are accused of this fault, that we are addicted to novelty, start many things, continue in none nor stop. And we encounter this most in teaching, since we take hold of new things every day. But this is the fickleness of the human heart; therefore you must think not of the beginning but of the end; therefore see that you persevere. You will suffer your wisdom to be slandered, you will experience ingratitude, your good deeds will be forgotten, your best counsel will be belittled, and evil will be repaid for good. If now thy heart should be weak, it will desist. But you continue bravely, persevere, for God will finally give you the fruit of your labor.

A patient mind is better than a high mind.

He still remains with the exhortation. In human affairs, it is necessary to look at the end. This does not require a high spirit that changes immediately, since it wants everything to be done at once and does everything with a certain impetuosity, but a patient spirit that overcomes the evils that oppose and hinder through patience and suffering, which is also taught by these sayings of the sages: Hasten with haste, and: Suffer and endure, 2c.

V. 10. Be not quick to anger, for anger rests in the heart of a fool.

Solomon makes many exhortations to persevere in what we have begun, however little our counsels are carried out. But he speaks of the wrath of the heart, as he said above of the outward wrath. He says, Be not quick to anger, whatever occasions of anger may occur. "Nar

ren shall be angry." Fools have anger in their hearts and at the same time by heart. But keep a merry heart, and be outwardly serious.

For anger rests in the heart of a fool.

This is a Hebrew way of speaking. For this we would say in German: "Zorn hängt to the fool," that is, they like to anger.

V. 11 Do not say, "What is it that the former days were better than these? For you do not bear these things wisely.

The human heart, when it experiences the ingratitude of the world, laments: "It is worse than it has ever been before. But you do not speak like that, because you do not ask and do not speak right. For so old people use to say: When I was a child, everything was better, as the poet says: A praiser of the past time (*laudator temporis acti*). But Solomon says: This is wrong, "it never happened right". But that you see and understand this only now, this is the cause that, as we grow, also the experiences in things and the occasions for anger grow. A child does not care, nor is it moved by the fact that one deceives another, kills, etc., but plays, hunts, rides, and thinks that this is the highest disgrace, when one steals the other's pellets; then it is angry. But when a man becomes a householder, then he feels the complaint and disloyalty of the servants; then he is angry when a horse breaks a leg, or an ox does not want to get fat 2c.

The world has always been evil, of course, but we have not always been in the well, and still are not. Since we were children, nothing was clouded for us; we were in a calmer life, but the world has always remained the same. This is true, of course, that the world erupts more at some times than at others, but this happens because from time to time there are other incidents and also greater occasions, but the wickedness of the world always remains the same. Julius Caesar shook the whole world because he had great occasion to do so; if Esau or Absalom had had the same, they would have done the same. Therefore, the same evils are always in the world. Therefore, be careful to have a quiet and calm heart; do not be angry when you see these evils; you will not change the world, but see to it that you shape yourself into a different person.

V. 12. 13. Wisdom is good with an inheritance, and helps that one may rejoice in the sun. For wisdom shields, so does money; but wisdom gives life to him who has it.

Solomon's only problem here is that he should not be regarded as approving of sloth, as those who hear the doctrine of godliness tend to do. They say, "If all our doings are condemned, then we will do nothing; we will be completely idle. But Solomon opposes this and says: "I do not condemn goods, nor do I approve of sloth; rather, I approve of both goods and wisdom, but I prefer wisdom to goods because it gives life to man. By the way, I reject the human advice for the acquisition of wealth and all things. And you, I say, do not be full of effort, but do not be idle either, be neither a fool nor a wise man, for neither is good, that is, do not do your counsels for this purpose, nor direct your efforts with all your might to attain goods or wisdom, but take care of what God wants to be taken care of, and do your own of it, which is nothing but vanity. For the wisdom of God is not held out to you for the sake of it, so that you may accomplish it, but look upward that God may work this righteousness, wisdom 2c. Thus he likewise rejects human counsels for procuring any things, and yet he exhorts that men should remain in the midst of things, governing and directing affairs, but in the present, and expect God's hand when they see that it does not succeed 2c. For if you begin to enforce your counsels, you will get nothing out of it but vanity and heartache 2c.

Wisdom is good with a hereditary property, and helps that one can look forward to the sun. 1)

"To see the sun" means to be cheerful and of good cheer in this life, or to live pleasantly. He wants to say: wisdom with an inheritance surpasses the most pleasant life in this world. And he adds the simile, "Wisdom shields, so does money," as it is said, "Good makes courage," that is, those who have grates have a good confidence, those who have wisdom also have

1) In Latin: KspieMin euw kerettitite M6lior est vitsntibus "olein.

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a good confidence (he admits this), but still I make a difference. In this, wisdom has an advantage over goods or money, because wisdom gives life to the one who possesses it. Money cannot do this; it does not keep alive, nor does it save from death. This he says, lest it should appear that he rejects goods altogether, but he rejects only the abuse 1) which the wicked have; then he prefers wisdom, because the knowledge of wisdom gives life to him who possesses it.

V. 14. Behold the works of God, for who can make bad that which he bendeth?

Here he concludes this whole teaching, which he started to strengthen the people who are impatient and angry [because of the wickedness of the world], with a beautiful final speech. He says: Why are you angry? Why are you impatient against the unthankful? Behold the works of God, that no man can make straight him whom he himself hath made crooked; let this comfort thee. For by this evidence you can know that God governs all things, and does not require of you that all be good and thankful, and that it is not up to you to make them such people. Therefore, be equanimous and let it go as it goes, for it cannot be otherwise than it goes. It is not in my hands to make the crooked straight. I do good to many, and behold, I receive ill-talk and ingratitude in return; but this is not to be wondered at, and nothing new happens in it. For if God has not given you an understanding and grateful heart, you will lose all your benefits. So there is an excellent teaching in this passage, that it is not in the free will of man to make his heart righteous (rectificare), but by human free will not even any burdensome thing can be improved. You can teach, admonish 2c., but no one but God alone can amend. That we know this is the only remedy for us against the so great ingratitude and so much spitefulness. Therefore, if your punishment and instruction do not help

If you want to be a heretic, then follow Paul's rule [Titus 3:10]: "Avoid a heretical man after he has been admonished once and again. If you do your part, God will do His part. For if thou wilt not abstain, unless thou hast first repented, it means that thou hast put thyself in God's place, that is, thou art evidently senseless.

V. 15. Be of good cheer on a good day, and take the evil day also for good; for this God has created along with that, that man may not know what is to come.

This is the other part of the final speech. Thou shalt do thus: When a happy day is given thee, be happy, that is, enjoy the present, lay aside thy cares, lay aside thy counsels, set a measure to all thy movements of mind, let God be thy wisdom, command him thy past and thy future. And so may you be joyful in the present.

Take the evil day also for good.

That means: You should prepare yourself in such a way that you can also have tribulations. Enjoy the present in such a way that you do not draw confidence from it as if it will last forever. Do not be secure by looking only to the good, but also be prepared for the evil day, always be free and equanimous. In this way he eliminates the mind and confidence of fools who are so attached to the present pleasures and immerse themselves in them as if the good day must always last. But we should be happy in such a way that we do not sink into it, but keep a part of the heart according to which we can also suffer the evil day. Thus it will happen that the foreseen evil will afflict us less.

For God creates this one next to that one. 2)

He leads all our thoughts toward GOD and snatches them away from things, For GOD does all this, he says, namely, the evil day next to the good, "sending misfortune next to happiness." And that according to his

2) In Latin: 8ient enim üano, mv vt iU&H" teeir Dominus inon? suo.
' I

1) Erlanger: usum instead of: ndusum.

If you do it in your own way or order (where again there is a Hebrew expression in the word XXX, which is also found above in the third chapter, v. 18, and in the 110th Psalm, v. 4: "According to the way of Melchizedech"), that is, as it is written and said of him, "according to his way", "the way he uses", then behold, you will easily overcome the temptations. But we completely immerse ourselves either in joy or in adversities. But the godly speak when they suffer the alternation of good and evil: This is God's order or way, and do not allow themselves to become discontented.

That man shall not know what is to come. 1)

This means that he is instructed that he cannot have more good than God has given him, even if he strives for it. Man strives beyond what God has done, but he finds nothing. God has given happiness, and you seek more happiness, but you will not find it. For no one can add even the slightest thing to GOD's works; "if our LORD has made out GOD, you will add nothing to it." When the heart is filled with joy, it cannot be grieved, and again. Thus God ordains everything, so that you may learn to be satisfied with what He Himself offers and enjoy it in moderation, so that our joy may be in the Lord.

V. 16: I have seen all manner of things in time above my vanity. There is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness; and there is an ungodly man who lives long in his wickedness.

After he has finished the exhortations and consolations, he returns to his register, looking around. He says: "As I was examining the individual things, among the other vanities, I also encountered this one, which will now be enumerated.

There is a righteous man and he goes under 2c.

Here again we have to pay attention to Solomon, so that we do not think he is talking.

1) In Latin: Ilt non inveriLt coma post 6umthat man after him
[GOttj nothing
find

Here he speaks of divine righteousness or the righteousness of faith, but he speaks of worldly righteousness, so that by the "righteous" you must understand a man who presses for righteousness, "who wants to make people righteous," as a man is who is in the worldly regiment, or a good steward. He says, "I have seen a righteous man who had excellent rights and laws; when he began to insist on them and required everything to be done according to the rule, he did nothing but make everything go backward; as that Thor did who stood bent in the sunlight, accusing the crooked shadow, though he did not straighten himself in the meantime. We are such people too. We see the splinter in other people's eyes, but we do not pay attention to the beam that is in our eye. Summa Summarum: The highest right is the highest wrong. Whoever wants to rule and make everything straight in the worldly regiment and in the household, will have a lot of trouble, but no success. Again, another wants to do nothing and is a despiser of justice, which must be required. Neither of the two is good for anything, neither that one is wise, nor that one is unwise, one must be neither just nor godless. What then is one to do? This shall be the middle way:

V. 17, 18: Be not too righteous, nor too wise, lest thou corrupt thyself. Do not be too ungodly, and do not be foolish, lest you die untimely.

That is, let the highest right depart, and measure thyself by thine own foot, and sing: γνώθει σεαυτόν [know thyself], then thou shalt find in thine own bosom an abundant register of infirmities, and shalt say, Behold, I myself am yet unrighteous, and yet God tolerates me, and I am not outcast from men. Why then do I allow myself to be so carried away by impetuosity that I demand of others so strictly what I myself do not perform? That is called "being too righteous. The things of this world do not suffer this. Therefore, keep the laws with teachings and preaching, and give thanks to God if the servants or listeners agree that the laws and teachings are holy and just, even if they do not keep everything according to the rules. So you are truly righteous

and wise. But you are "too wise and too just" if you have to manage in the worldly or in the house government, and have good laws, and so insist on these, and want to have them kept in such a way that you do not want it to be missed even by a jot. For this means: The highest right is the highest wrong.

A prudent person in authority and a householder must make a distinction between a good law and the obedience of the subjects to it. It is better that we suffer a small rebellion (*modicam rebellionem*) than that the whole state goes to ruin. This tends to happen to the strict drivers of the laws. Therefore the laws must be carried out, and they must be insisted upon as far as the cause suffers, but no further. This is also what doctors do. They do not judge and cure diseases merely by books or by what is prescribed, but often have to make changes according to the constitution of the body. Thus, people's minds are very different, so that even the laws often have to be moderated. This requires very wise men, of whom there are very few in the world. Therefore, only people like David, Abraham, Solomon, Joshua and the like of them should be made stewards and rulers, if they could be found who could use the laws properly. For it is very important that a community is well administered.

Don't be too godless 2c.

This is the other part of the final speech. See to it that just as you are not too righteous, so you are not too ungodly, that is, that you do not despise and neglect all the government that is commanded you, and let everything go over and under. It is good to overlook some things, but not to neglect everything. If wisdom is of no avail, one need not be senseless in anger and revengefulness for its sake. Then do not give yourself over to idleness, so that you do not care about anything. Do not act like that ungodly servant [Matt. 25:24 ff] who buried the penny and would do nothing with it 2c. Up! be righteous, and others with you;

demand godliness, stop, however it may be. Why?

Lest thou perish, lest thou die untimely.

For it is to be feared that he will come suddenly and call thee to judgment, as he took away the soul of the rich man by night, when the rich man was not careful [Luc. 12:20]. If this life were heavenly and angelic, nothing would be done unjustly, but the sinful nature cannot but sin, but be foolish. Those who do not know this do not yet know the world. We must think that we are here as in a shipwreck or conflagration, where one must strive to pluck at least one fire out of the fire, if one cannot manage or extinguish the whole fire. Therefore, if you are in housekeeping, be satisfied if you can pull even one out of the general conflagration of godless people. If you are a schoolteacher, strive to raise up at least one and instruct him properly 2c. If you are a preacher of the gospel, preach in such a way, not as if you could win all for Christ (for not all obey the gospel), but if you can bring three or four souls to Christ and convert them, as it were, as the ends of smoking fires 1) give thanks to God. For you do not have to stop for the sake of it, because so few improve in the preaching of the Gospel, but, as Christ did, so do you also. He has plucked out the elect, and let the others go. So did the apostles; you will be no better. You are foolish if you alone fail to do everything, or if you fail to despair of everything.

V. 19 It is good that you take hold of these things and do not let those things out of your hand, for he who fears God escapes them all.

Christ uses a similar saying Matth. 23, 23: "This is what should be done, and

1) *eauâas titionum kunuMntiui*". This passage confirms (against Dietz) the explanation which we have given to the word "Brandsthwanz" in our edition Vol. XX, 2390. Compare Vol. XIX, 963, § 2 unv the note to it.

not leave that." So also here he demands both, righteousness and yet not the highest righteousness, so that you should neither be too lax nor too strict. At times overreach laws and rights, as if you were an ungodly man. At times take hold of the laws, and again become a righteous man; but be mindful that he is not speaking here of personal righteousness, as is also said above, but of common righteousness, or that in worldly government, which is not before God, but in the government of others and before the world. For in personal righteousness, justice cannot be too great.

He who fears God escapes all this.

That is, the fear of the Lord will easily judge both. When I fear the Lord, my heart says, "I have often lived this way and still live shamefully. I will therefore have patience with those who err. If I can keep them in check with idle discipline, I will do so; if not, I will let them go until they receive their justice by the sword. But even if they escape all this, they will not escape the judgment of God. Thus he who fears God walks rightly in these things; seeing that he cannot do it, he therefore calls upon the Lord. Therefore do thine own, remind, exhort, do not desist. Whoever does not hear you will be punished, even though you do not punish, for there will be one who will punish, as happened recently to the peasants. Since they would not accept our rebuke, they are sufficiently punished by others 2c.

V. 20. Wisdom strengthens a man more than ten mighty men who are in the city.

This is a price of the already mentioned wisdom, namely of equity. It is not through power that things rise, but through wisdom that everything is driven and flourishes in government, in laws, in administration, in the arts. This is how we humans were created, to act with reason, and to be able to do more with it than all animals with their powers. Thus man tames the wild horse and the mighty lion by his reason. Therefore, no matter how many

If laws are given, if the regiments are well ordered and written, things will often go very badly if wisdom is not added. For when a wise man gives laws, it is impossible for him to see all the different circumstances and conditions. Therefore, much is left to the handlers of the laws. Thus also the jurists call the emperor a living law, because he is in such a position that he can direct the laws as a charioteer directs the chariot, and arrange everything according to place, time, persons 2c. For with laws that are strictly kept, the Thor does more harm than the wise man by setting them aside. All this is still said as an admonition. Do not be angry, he says, if things do not turn out as you wish; it is enough for you to keep the laws so that everything is not trampled underfoot. For this is the highest wisdom, not that one should know the laws and rights, but that one should know that in this world one does not obey wisdom. This life does not suffer everything to be done in the right way. The brief epitome of this passage is therefore: One must not trust in power, but rule with wisdom, which often preserves everything in a kingdom where power corrupts everything. Why is that?

V. 21 For there is not a man on earth who does good and does not sin.

Always keep in mind that Solomon speaks of those who are under the sun and of the things that are done. He does not actually instruct the conscience here, but teaches the peace of heart in difficult and burdensome things of this world. That is why he expressly adds: "On earth", namely by talking about earthly justice and about the sins that we commit one against the other, as if he wanted to say: Why do you strive to require everything according to the law? That will never happen, that everything will go quite right. If you want to live in the worldly regime, you must overlook many things, tolerate many things, and not want to know many things, in order to receive at least some justice.

Look at yourself, and you will see how often you yourself act unjustly, and deal with that which rightly displeases many; therefore

Do not be too righteous, because you also sin and give offense in many things. So also Christ says Matth. 7, 3: "You see the mote in your neighbor's eye, and are not aware of the beam in your own eye." But there he is talking about heavenly justice. If we looked at ourselves in our own house, we would no doubt find the infirmities that rightly vex others. This should certainly remind us that we should not be so strict judges of others and not all too righteous promoters of other people's justice. For that is why the strictest promoters generally have the greatest infirmities. They do not know the spirit of mercy and compassion; they are burdensome and unbearable to themselves and to others.

So Solomon wants this: Do not be angry when you see that what annoys you happens and is done, because you do not always do what you should do. For in very many things you must close your eyes and suffer them. For as it belongs to the righteousness of faith and to spiritual righteousness to bear the weak in faith and to instruct them with gentleness, so it belongs to worldly righteousness (of which he speaks here) to bear the infirmities of others, so that forbearance is a mutual one, by which we bear and overlook something in one another. Cicero, in the book on friendship, wants nothing to be overlooked in friends. 1) And Erasmus, in his book on foolishness (*Moria*), wants all the infirmities of friends to be punished. These are also thoughts of people who are often moved by the highest passion. The fools rule the world with their books, and do not see that no one can perform what they prescribe. Thus the Stoics have portrayed the wise man in an exceedingly foolish way as a man without feeling, and are themselves the most troublesome people of all. So it only remains that we carry and overlook the other. For there is no man who does not sin, who does nothing that is burdensome to others.

Neither take to heart all that is said, lest thou hear thy servant cursing thee. For your heart knows that you have often cursed others.

As I have told you of the experience you have when you look at yourself [v. 17 f.], so I say also of what you hear from others. It is true that the servants must be governed, and the ungodly must be punished; but if thou canst not mend anything about it, let it go; the ungodly do not go unpunished. For this is a true saying: "You will not escape the executioner, for God himself is the executioner."

So that you do not have to hear your servant curse you.

Some people are so curious to hear something about themselves that they lie in wait for all the sayings and hints of all the people, so that they also listen at the windows and the cracks in the walls to what everyone is saying about them. It serves them right that they hear even from their servants what grieves them. Therefore, if you want to lend your ear to all their talk, expect that you will also hear your own cursing you; indeed, this may happen, since you do not understand it. For as you learn many things, so you will also hear many things that you do not like to hear, so that it is not necessary that you curiously catch the speeches of all people. Therefore, do not be angry immediately and take up arms, but rather leave it unnoticed, because you have also missed many things against others. If Jupiter should hurl lightnings as often as men deserve, he would soon be without weapons, as Horace 2) says.

These two things are therefore necessary in the management of affairs; namely, one who makes the laws (legislator), and another who applies the law rightly (moderator). The legislator to shape and order the community with good laws, but the moderator to apply the laws themselves and use them rightly and wisely according to the nature of the places, the people and the persons 2c. A right administrator

2) Wittenberg and Jena: Horatius; Erlanger: Ovidius.

1) Wittenberger: *dissiiutari*; Erlanger and Jenaer: *äissinulare*. The former seems to us to be better.

In a community, the law is more necessary than the lawgiver himself, as can be seen from examples in the household. A prudent householder assigns to each his expenses at certain hours and in certain places; then he arranges for certain food and clothing for the servants and maids. But if an accident occurs, such as the servant becoming ill, then the law must be broken and consideration given to the time. A sick person is not required to do the prescribed work, is given better food and drink, better lodging than the others 2c., and is exempted from the rule. Otherwise the householder would be foolish and ungodly if he did not do so. So here the precept of the law falls, because of the change of the person. Therefore, if we often deviate from the law and sin in word and deed, we should suffer the same in others.

V. 24, 25: All these things I have tried wisely. I thought I would be wise, but it came farther from me. It is far off; what will it be? And is very deep; who will find it?

He gives his experience by telling what happened to him before, when he was investigating these things. He says: I instruct you by my example, I teach that one must desist from this wisdom, and that there is indeed a wisdom, but there is not such a wise man. I, too, was forced by this experience to learn, because I wanted to be too wise, and to teach that the world should be governed by the very strictest laws. But since I undertook this, I did not succeed at all. Therefore, as I have said, human life must have these two things: A lawgiver and a right administrator of the law, and this no less than that, as it is not enough for a carter to have good horses and to know the way from which he drives, if he does not steer the carriage according to the way of the road. Therefore, equity must also be connected with the law which shall say thus: You have indeed ordered this and that law well and it must be kept; but, if it is necessary, exceptions must also be made.

And is very deep 2c.

Thus it is also said above [Cap. 1, 8]: "Everything is so full of trouble that no one can talk it out" 2c. Those who make the laws have only the general in mind, that it should be so; but those who have to do with the administration, they have to deal with special and individual things, and see whether it can be done so. There are innumerable cases, also innumerable circumstances. This depth cannot be fathomed. Therefore the summa of the seventh chapter and this exhortation is: As much as you can, uphold the law, and as much as you can, temper the law. Do not take it into your head that everything should be kept in the strictest way, nor be weary through weariness, but only fear the Lord, and he will teach you everything rightly; for those who are without the fear of God are either too righteous or too impatient.

V. 26. I turned my heart to know, and to search, and to seek wisdom and art, to know the folly of the wicked, and the error of the foolish.

This is a kind of addition to the previous exhortation and teaching, as if he wanted to say: I have been very careful to see what happens to those who want everything to be done in a righteous way and are too righteous in demanding righteousness, namely, how they do not succeed and how they become fools by being too wise, and I have found that instead of this being unwise is the highest wisdom. Again, I have searched all ranks to learn how the wicked do things, how fools do things, whether it is better to let all care go (as fools do) or to be too righteous. For he again speaks of things that have been done or are to be done by fools and the wicked, as he spoke before of the deeds of those who are righteous in the world.

V. 27. And found that such a woman, whose heart is a net and a snare, and her hands are bands, is more bitter than death. He who pleases God will escape, but the sinner will be caught by her.

Among the affairs of fools, I have also considered that which comes from the women. For since he wrote the register of vanity, this also did not have to be passed over. It happens to the fools who withdraw their hand and want to do nothing and be free of everything that they get into the hands of the women and have to serve the women. For he speaks of a woman who is in command, who ascribes wisdom and dominion to herself, not of the wrath of women, although it is true that a woman has such a mind that she can temper herself less than a man. Nor is the sex condemned here, which is God's creature. For a distinction must be made between the sex and its infirmities, as he distinguished above the works of God from the counsels of men. Man is the work of God, but beyond this work he also wants to follow his counsels and not be governed by God alone, while he alone was created and made by God. Thus one must also distinguish the sex from its infirmities. For the woman, insofar as she is a creature of God, must be regarded with reverence, for she was created to be around the man, to feed the children and to raise them honorably and godly, to be subject to the man. But the men are commanded to rule and have dominion over the women and the servants. But if the woman wants to leave her office and take over the dominion of the man, then she is no longer doing the work for which she was created, but something that is out of her own infirmity and evil. For God did not create this gender for dominion, therefore her rule never prospers.

Against this one could object the histories of the Amazons, which are often quoted by the Greek writers, of whom one reports that they had the rule and led wars; but I believe that this is a fable, which one tells about them. But that the Moors (Aethiopes) choose women both as kings and as princes, they do according to their custom (as in the Acts of the Apostles [Cap. 8, 27.] of Queen Candace in

(The first mention of this is in Mohrenland), but they do it foolishly, just as foolish rulers are often set over a kingdom. But it is never permitted by God that a woman should rule. It may happen that she is appointed to rule in the place of the king, but she always has a council (senatum) of noble men, according to whose opinion everything is directed. Although therefore a woman is put in the royal place, the rule of the women is not confirmed by it. For the text is clear

[Gen. 3:16: "Thou shalt be subject unto thy husband, and he shall be thy lord." The woman is created for his benefit, that she may use her prudence and use her reason in the rearing of children. For as each one is created, so he also works most appropriately. "A woman grasps a child much better with the smallest finger than a man with both fists." Therefore, let each one remain in the work to which he is called and ordered by God.

The sum of this passage is therefore this: Among the other hindrances to the peace that the human heart should have is also the woman, namely such a woman who does not let the man accomplish what he is able to. Thus Samson, the exceedingly excellent man, was seduced by Delilah, a rejected woman. For they are not satisfied with their distaff and their wool, but also want to dictate to men in the things that belong to the government of public affairs. Such wives, I say, saith Solomon, I hate greatly, for they are more bitter than death, being a great cause of our vanity. For when men begin to give themselves to them, all things perish, as happened to Samson. So also Solomon himself became a fool through women. So he says this: As I have seen men who were too righteous and too wicked, so I have seen women who ruled, namely, a great vanity, not because of sex, but because of ropes and nets. Therefore the wise flee these ropes by the word, not About the sex itself.

V. 28. 29. Behold, these things have I found, saith the preacher, one by one, that I have found art.

I invented. And my soul still searches, and has not found it. Among a thousand I have found one man, but among them all I have found no woman.

That is, through my experience and observation I have learned many things in other things, namely that everything is vain; others may learn the same. For this is the highest human wisdom, that one knows that no wisdom is able or achieves anything, except as far as God gives prosperity. So Socrates also said: I know that I know nothing; if he understood it differently. *Unum post unum*, "one thing after another," that is, I have examined every single undertaking; everywhere I find that no one can live rightly according to his advice. "And my soul still searches," that is, I see vanity in myself and in others, and yet I do not cease to be senseless, and cannot restrain myself from searching for what I know I shall not find. "One man in a thousand," that is, who see that his wisdom is nothing, however much they may see that things always turn out differently from what they have considered. But the people are rare who have acquired this negative wisdom. So also Demosthenes, after having spent all wisdom in vain, said that wisdom is nothing. Therefore the philosophers also said that everything happens by chance and by the roll of luck. For they could not think that the divine wisdom was greater and higher than our counsels and presumptions.

But I have not found a woman among them all.

If the men cannot do this, or only so few, the women can do it even less. Again, he speaks of the female sex as it is outside of grace in nature and under the sun. For nature cannot dictate God's works and miracles. He says that among a thousand men, one can hardly be found who, through experience, has finally come to the point where he says: "My counsels and noble deeds do not work out, do not accomplish anything," and thus has become fit to govern. Of the

But not even one woman gets there, because of the order of God. Therefore, they should not be heard in these matters.

V. 30. See this alone, I have found that God has made man upright; but they seek many arts.

This is what the school theologians have twisted up to now, in order to align the free will against grace, against the opinion of Solomon, since Solomon speaks of bodily things in this whole book. And (as was also said before) he does not instruct the consciences before God (only that he sometimes remembers the fear of God), but instructs man in the worldly regiment, so that he keeps his heart in check.

Therefore, this is the opinion: God has placed man in things, has given him certain works, certain labor, but man does not remain in these works, but loads himself with foreign things through his desire. "God has made man upright", "straight before 1) Himself", that he may see what is before him and under his eyes, that is, the present things, and be satisfied with them. But man lets this straight being (*rectitudine*) go and makes himself content with what is to come. Solomon therefore wants to say this: I have found through my research that no one lives contentedly with his fate, that all have crooked and evil eyes, as Ovid said:

*Fertilior seges est alieno semper in agro
Vicinumque pecus grandius uber habet.*

(In German: In a foreign field the seeds always stand better than in ours, and the neighbor's cattle give more milk than ours]. And [Horace 2) says]:

Optat ephippia bos piger, optat arare caballus,
[The lazy ox would like to be a riding horse, the riding horse would like to plow] Such were Peter's eyes when he said [John 21:21], "But what is this?" It is therefore this sincere nature in outward things, that each one looks straight before himself in his doing and negating, and does not look elsewhere.

1) In the old editions: "for".

2) *liorat*. Lp. I, 14, v. 42.

But they look for a lot of arts.

That is, they occupy themselves with many counsels and anxious thoughts about how they want to govern everything in the future, leaving the present and what God has set before them. Thus the woman occupies herself with the duties of the man, the man with what is of the woman. Therefore, this saying is a summa of human vanity.

Cap. 8, 1. Who is so wise? and who can interpret it?

That is, all things are difficult, it cannot be said sufficiently [Cap. 1:8]. For we are so immersed in our presumptions and our counsels that we even do not realize that we are so immersed in them; as if he wanted to say: I will be silent about the doing itself; indeed, even the doctrine and the law (jus) itself men do not understand, so much is lacking in it that they can do it, and it is an indication of how vain the human heart is.

The wisdom of man enlightens his face; but he who is insolent is hostile.

I believe that this belongs to the preceding. But this is a figure of speech that Solomon uses here, which is partly known to us from other passages of Scripture that have a similar figurative speech, as, Proverbs 7:13, where it is said of the fornicating woman whom the young man goes to meet: "She flatters him with impertinent

(forti vultu), likewise [v. 10.): "There met him a woman with an insolent face, (fortis facie). Thus Daniel Cap. 8:23 says, "An insolent (fortis facie) king." But this image denotes the impudence and insolence of the countenance, where there is no fear, no timidity, as in Proverbs [Cap. 21, 29. Vulg.] it is said of the fool, "The fool makes his face firm," that is, he has a stiff neck, is without fear and shame.

This passage can be understood in two ways, first in an active way, so that "wisdom enlightens the face of the righteous" is as much as: wisdom gives him a lovely expression of the face. On the other hand, the hypocrites walk sadly, as Christ says of the Pharisees, Matth. 6, 16: "They disguise their faces," that is, "they look sour. But the wise man always walks with a cheerful face because he does what he can; the wicked man always has a hostile and gloomy face. So it is a kind of proverbial saying, as if to say, "You can tell by the eyes where there is a merry heart." But the wicked almost always have a wrinkled brow, for as their heart is, so are their countenances. Secondly, the passage can be interpreted in a passive way, almost in the same way, namely: "He who has a cheerful face is also pleasant to others, pleases others, and the intercourse with him is pleasant and cheerful. But it is in this way a resolution to the praise of the wise.

The eighth chapter.

V. 2. I wait for the mouth of the king, and the oath of God.

We have seen that Solomon in this book deals with sending people away from doing. Since he does this, it requires no less effort to bring them back to activity. In the same way, when we preach the faith, we also exhort people from works altogether, so that we can

praise the refraining from our doings (sabbatum). Again, if faith is planted, one must be eager for Christians to be exceedingly busy toward their neighbor, and not at all keep a day of rest (sabbatum) here, but be zealous for good works [Tit. 2, 14.], be inflamed with love toward their neighbor, and only keep the rest (sabbatum) toward God. Thus he teaches here,

that we should not do anything according to our own counsel and our own judgment, but everything according to the word of God. This is the subject of about half this chapter.

Since he now says: "I wait for the mouth of the king", he admonishes to the worldly obedience. For it must be understood of a worldly king and kingdom, although it could also be taken of G^Otte, but not according to the context of the text. But he assumes the person of the subjects. I, he says, would pay attention to the mouth of the king; I advise you to be your king's subject; do not follow your suggestions. You have enough what you should do in the worldly regiment; do only what the king commands, who is decreed by God that you hear him. But quite significantly he says: "The mouth of the king", because he wants to bind us to the word and obedience to it. He says: Everything that the authorities say according to the laws, that you shall do.

And keep (observa) the oath of God.

Here you must understand the oath, not with which God swears, but the one that is sworn to God. He says: Obey the authorities according to the oath of God, that is, as you have sworn to God. For he who swears to the authorities does not swear to a man, but to God. Here you see perfectly how worldly obedience is included in obedience to God. So also Paul wants [Eph. 6, 5. 6.] that the servants should be obedient to the masters, not as men, but as gods.

V. 3. 4. Be not in haste to depart from his presence, and stay not in evil: for he doeth that which he lusteth after. There is power in the king's word, and who can say to him, "What are you doing?"

"To depart from the face" is a Hebrew expression that is frequent in the Scriptures in Jonah, in Job, likewise in Matthew Cap. 18, 28: "When the servant departed from the face of the Lord, he found one of his fellow servants" 2c. But "to depart from the presence" is nothing other than to depart from obedience, or to fail to obey, or to lack obedience.

Do not remain in evil.

Do not persevere in disobedience, but persevere in obedience, as if to say: Though the thing which the king hath commanded should not prosper as the king hath commanded, though the king should err, yet persevere, and work that the king's mouth may remain in his majesty, that thou resist not, because thou shalt not escape his punishment.

For he does what he desires.

Namely in his kingdom. For he speaks of the worldly government. He will, he says, administer and defend justice. For this he is appointed by God, therefore fear him. It is completely the same thing that Paul says Rom. 13, 2: "But those who resist will receive judgment upon themselves." And it is not possible that he who opposes the authorities should escape judgment. Therefore, the safest thing is to obey the authorities absolutely. And he shows the power of the king: Whatever he desires, that will he do. For it is a divine order. Therefore you will not be able to do anything, you will not be able to resist, even if you cause turmoil and violence. So either obey him for your good, or flee for your misfortune, because "there is violence in the king's word. The word of the king "is a right sultan" [XXXXX]. For this comes from the word XXXX, which means to rule. All this is said so that he may exhort us to keep obedience and perseverance in the work we are commanded to do, even if we do not succeed in it immediately as we wish.

V. 5. Whoever keeps the commandment will experience no evil.

This is the resolution of the preceding. But this can also be interpreted in two ways. First, he who keeps the commandment will not want to suffer evil, that is, he will guard himself and keep himself from doing evil. Second, he who keeps the commandment will suffer no evil. Both make good sense, but I like the former better.

But a wise man's heart knows the time and the way.

When the word "*judgment*" (*judicium*) is used alone, it generally denotes retribution (*vindictam*), "punishment. Thus Rom. 13:2: "They will receive judgment (*judicium*) upon themselves", that is, "they will not go unpunished". This is also how it is taken here: The wise man knows that there is a certain hour for the punishment (*judicio*) against the disobedient, and that no one can escape this hour. Therefore, he fears God and does no evil.

V. 6, 7: For every purpose has its time and manner, for there is much misfortune in man. For he knows not what hath been; and who shall tell him what shall be?

This is a threat of future punishment to the disobedient, as if he wanted to say: I advise you to be obedient and subject to the authorities; but if anyone does not want to be subject to the authorities by disobeying them, he may still go, but he will receive the reward of plunging into much misfortune and incurring much heartache and sorrow. He must fear at every hour, but still cannot escape. Therefore he can do nothing better than to obey absolutely. For what is the use of not wanting to obey if one cannot escape judgment? This is what happened to the peasants. This is how the preachers should admonish the troublemakers and the rebellious. For judgment is decreed and determined by God for all the disobedient, and vengeance or punishment no one escapes. It is therefore an immense comfort for the authorities, fathers and teachers, who, if they do what they can, but those are stiff-necked and disobedient, and do not want to be punished and escape their hands, should be of calm and good cheer, certain that they will not escape their punishment.

For man's misfortune is much with him.

Not with the one who is obedient, namely the mouth of the king.

Because he does not know what has been.

With a general sentence, he proves the peculiar, as if he wanted to say: A Un

The obedient one turns away his eyes and does not see what is before his eyes; he does not see what he should do or how great an evil disobedience is.

And who wants to tell him what should become?

That is, the disobedient person does not know what will happen. Through disobedience he desires many things, hopes that he will gain great things, and is deceived. He promises himself impunity, but when he is least aware of it, the judgment and the hour are there, and he perishes in his disobedience. In short, the wicked despises the present obedience, he does not look at the future punishment. The wise man, however, does not act in this way, but recognizes that disaster awaits the disobedient; therefore he obeys.

V. 8. a man hath not power over the Spirit to resist the Spirit; and hath not power in time of death, neither is loosed in battle.

He interprets for himself what he said above about obeying the king: "There is authority in the king's word. For it is so ordained of God that he cannot escape unpunished who despises to obey. Man does not have such great power that he can resist the king. Why then does he disobey? "He cannot resist the spirit", that is, he cannot resist the life, the breath of life, "he must endure". He will not escape. "He has not power at the time of dying, and is not let go in the strife." Summa: God has so many judgments and so many ways to punish that no one can escape His hand, and if he should escape other things, He casts him into war that he may perish there. Therefore, he concludes:

And the ungodly does not save the ungodly.

That is, therefore, be obedient, do what you must, for you will not be let go, and your disobedience will not go unpunished. No one means that I teach rebellion or omission.

V. 9 I have seen all these things, and have given my heart to all the works that are done under the sun. One man at times rules over another to his misfortune.

Now he returns to his register, enumerating again the miseries of human vanity. Among all that I have mentioned, I have also seen this, that one man rules over another to his misfortune. This is to be referred to the person who is in subjection, that is, it often happens that tyrants rule; but they rule to the heartbreak of the subjects. Nevertheless, one should wait for the mouth of the king and not stir up a riot. For even if there is a good ruler, there is no thanksgiving, and not only no thanksgiving, but the people become even more angry, as now the common man, since he has become free from the papal laws and bonds. All desire that tyranny be removed, but when they become free, they cannot endure that either. Solomon therefore admits that evil authorities are there to punish the subjects, but nevertheless one must also bear them.

V.10. And there I saw the wicked buried, which had walked, and had walked in the holy place, and were forgotten in the city, because they had done so. This is also vain.

A similar passage is Amos 6:1: "Woe unto you that are rich in Zion, which enter into the hall of Israel with great pomp." But to enter the community or the house of God is, according to Hebrew figurative speech, to administer the same as a magisterial office in the people of God. Thus, Deut. 23:3 forbids the Ammonites from entering into the community of God, that is, from ruling in the community of the Jews. For the Ammonites could be in the people of God, but could not administer a magisterial office. So also here: "They have walked in holy places," that is, they have governed the commonwealth. Hence he says, "I saw ungodly men buried," that is, that the tyrants had died, and a good prince followed, as after Saul's death David. But when the wicked of

When they are freed from tyranny, they forget about salvation. People do not even recognize the benefits. We too immediately forgot about the extremely good Prince Frederick, who gave us peace (*pacis autoris*). No one remembers what good we have gained through him and from what evils we are freed through him. We always desire other things, but we neglect and forget the present. But all this is said by Solomon for this reason, so that we may learn to recognize the world and use the foolishness of the world wisely.

Therefore, new rulers in particular should read this book, who, having a head full of their own opinions, want to rule the world according to their advice and demand everything according to the guideline. But these should first learn to recognize the world, namely, that it is unjust, obdurate, disobedient, wicked, and in sum, ungrateful. They should thank God, however, if they can only persuade the hundredth part to keep the laws. Thus, even our red spirits are not satisfied with the present good, the preaching of the faith and the grace of the gospel; they confuse everything with new and void doctrines. Solomon's advice, therefore, is that we should recognize their vanity and teach against it as much as we can. Moreover, we should abandon those whom we cannot convert to the faith with our exhortations and keep them there, because the wicked are even hardened by constant punishment. Therefore he says:

V. 11: Because judgment is not soon passed on evil works, men's hearts are filled to do evil.

This can be interpreted in two ways. In an active way (active) so: that is, the wicked continue in iniquity because of the postponement of their punishment. Because God does not immediately avenge as men do, they become insolent. But we, who see that they go unpunished, become full of much evil, we become indignant, we become disgruntled through weariness, and we cease to do good. For the postponement of punishment has this twofold effect: first, it makes people more angry and hardened,

On the other hand, it also makes others who see this lukewarm and causes them to desist. Both views are good.

V. 13. 13. Whether a sinner does evil a hundred times, and yet lives long, I know that it will be well with those who fear God, who fear His face. For it will not go well with the wicked, nor live long like a shadow, who do not fear God.

Now he does not comfort a man, but a godly heart. For a man cannot bear this, nor see such great ingratitude, and David also could not bear the ungrateful Nabal, and wanted to kill him, 1 Sam. 25, 13, according to human thoughts. Therefore he says: Only learn to recognize the world. You cannot make it otherwise; "it will not be guided by you, you must be guided by it," so that you know that it is ungrateful and unmindful of all good deeds. If you know this, it will be well with you. Therefore he wants to say: "Even if a sinner does evil a hundred times", that is, even if you delay the punishment a hundred times and do not avenge the evil, he will still have to suffer the punishment at last. It is not possible that those ingrates should not be punished. Therefore, do not hurry to make the world just or to punish everyone. Be satisfied if you can convert even the thousandth part to be grateful. Let the world sin, not you, for it will not escape punishment. Thus the Jews found Vespasianus their punisher, however much the murderers of the prophets and of Christ received respite in punishment.

"And shall not live long." It seems, indeed, as if the punishment of the wicked were long deferred, especially to the afflicted, but when the day and the punishment of the wicked come, it seems to us all too sudden, as Job [Cap. 15, 32.] says, that the wicked have their day come without delay, and the 55th Psalm, v. 24. "For the wicked people will not bring their life to the half," that is, since they always undertake and hope for infinite things, they will die sooner than they have accomplished or obtained the half.

V. 14. It is a vanity that is done on earth. There are righteous people, who are like

If they have the works of the wicked, and are wicked, it is as if they had the works of the righteous. And I said, This also is vain.

These two things are very annoying to the human heart, that the ingrates have their punishments postponed, and evil happens to the pious, that the good are hated, but the wicked are held in esteem; and yet this happens. In the past, the godless priests were given everything; now the godly are not given their food, and those who teach in the schools are not given their sustenance. To those who have made the world free, no other thanks are given than that they are trampled underfoot; but to those who ruin the world and sink it into misfortune, to them everything is given abundantly, just as now the servants of war are given more than those who teach rightly. This is said so often, that we may instruct the heart and teach the good, that they may learn what the world is, namely, a raging and ungrateful beast, puffed up by benevolence, which can do nothing but exalt the wicked and oppress the godly. We must not expect anything else.

V., 15. Therefore I praised the joy that a man has nothing better under the sun than to eat and drink, and to be merry; and such shall be his lot all the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.

This is a repetition, but a necessary one, because he said so many sad things that it seemed as if he had forgotten his goal (*scopi*). The race is ungrateful, always looking for something else, and tired of the present, however good it may be. It makes you work, mows you down, and despises and persecutes you. Therefore, mock the world, as it has mocked you. Do what you have to do and leave the worries and troubles behind and have a happy and calm heart, knowing that the race is such that it does not give its reward to the good.

V. 16. I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to see the toil that is done in the earth, that even one may not see sleep with his eyes day or night.

That is to say, as I went about torturing my heart and pondering the wisdom of how to do everything right on earth, I did nothing but cause myself sleepless nights. The same will happen to you, if you do not want to be happy, but toil with your presumption and your counsel. For this is no different from what is said of a fool who strives to carry the whole world on his shoulders, for this means that he wants to rule with his efforts and his laws. Rather, therefore, command all things GOtte, and be not forward in other people's affairs.

V. 17. And I saw all the works of God. For a man cannot find the work that is done under the sun; and the more a man labors to seek, the less he finds. Though he say, I am wise, and know it, yet can he not find it. Here is a fullness of speech of Solomon. The sense is similar to what is said above [Cap. 1, 15.]: Behold the works of GOD, that no one can make better him whom he himself has bent. So also here: No one presumes that he can make everything straight.

For this is the work of God alone, and not of man. For it is impossible that men are brought to do what God alone does. For man does not look at the present, nor is he satisfied by it, but looks only to the future. The human heart is full of its manifold counsels, but God has circumscribed everything with a certain limit; the present is present to Him, the future future; but we never calm ourselves with the present, nor are we satisfied by the future. This is nothing else than that the present is not present, likewise also the future is not future. The experience of this thing has led the poets to say that everything is governed by fate, and to invent that the parcels break our thread, even when we want to live in the best life. Thus Julius Caesar did not find his work, that is, he did not complete it; his memory failed him in the midst of his deeds. For while he was thinking of establishing the Roman Empire, or more correctly, of restoring it, he died in the midst of his undertaking. Because Absalom had his mind set on the kingdom, he perished most miserably.

The ninth chapter.

V. 1. For I have taken all these things to heart, to search out all these things, that the righteous and the wise are, and their subjects in the hand of God. But no man knoweth neither the love nor the hatred of any that he hath before him.

Here one must be carefully mindful of what this book is about, lest we listen to those who have drawn this text on whether one is worthy of God's hatred or love, and teach in an ungodly manner that no one is certain of grace, 2c. while Solomon speaks only of the works that are done under the sun, that is, among men, in the government of worldly (politica) life. Behold," he says, "how crooked it is.

I also find that there are people who rule justly and wisely, whose servants and subjects are in God's hands and are blessed and protected by Him, like Solomon and David. And yet man recognizes neither love nor hatred (both of which I take to be active), that is, men are so depraved that they do not recognize even these righteous and wise ones, whose servants, as they see, are ruled by God and prosper, as benefactors, or do not see their love or even their hatred. For nothing is forgotten more quickly than benevolence. Solomon ruled wisely, in peace, in great prosperity; when Solomon died, people immediately lamented

over the hard yoke of Solomon; there was no remembrance of his good deeds. No matter how it has been in the world, it has always been unbearable to the world. Italy can serve as an example for us: whether it has war or peace, it cannot bear it; in time of peace they seek war, in time of war they seek peace. With the present things the world cannot stand still, it always tortures itself with future ones. So Germany is always looking for something new. When the gospel came, everyone ran to it eagerly; but now that the gospel has penetrated, we are tired of it and have forgotten such great benefits. Now people run to the sacramentaries. But when they grow old, people will soon tire of them and desire something else. In short, the world cannot stand it, whether it is governed well or badly. A man who is not assisted by the Lord in the office of government could not live even one day without danger.

Therefore, whoever wants to serve the world with wisdom, righteousness, or any other good, expects nothing but the worst. Thus David and Solomon, the best of kings, loved the good and hated the evil, but the people did not recognize love and were unaware of all good deeds and goodness. Therefore John [1 Ep. 5, 19] rightly wrote that the world is in trouble, because there is only unrest and the highest wickedness. Who should therefore like this life, in which one lives in the highest danger and unrest as long as one lives?

V. 2, 3: It is the same for the righteous and for the wicked, for the good and the clean and for the unclean, for the one who sacrifices and for the one who does not. As it is with the good, so it is with the sinner. As it is with the perjurer, so it is with him who fears the oath. This is an evil thing of all that is done under the sun, that it befalls one as it befalls another; therefore also the heart of men is filled with evil, and folly is in their heart, while they live; after that they must die.

Again, a Solomonic fullness of speech, as if to say: The world is all full of

Unrest and ingratitude; it remembers as little the good as the bad. Now this is to be understood again as it stands before the world, not before God. The living righteous are despised by the world and in the world, but with God it will be well with them, as he said above [Cap. 7, 19]: "Whoever fears God, it will be well with him." But the world gives the same reward to good and evil. Everything is unpleasant to it; it is considered nothing that you have done good deeds. 1)

This is an evil thing among everything that happens under the sun.

That is, the human heart is too weak to suffer this perversity of the world. Those who do not have the fear of God cannot patiently suffer this ingratitude, nor that no distinction is made between the good and the bad, and the same happens to all.

Therefore, the heart of man also becomes full of evil.

That is, full of unwillingness, "displeasure", because they do not understand it, and can not be so disposed that they imitate God, who rains on the good and the evil. But I believe that here the philosophers and the monks are punished, who did not suffer this, and left the world, and did not want to serve the ungrateful world. Solomon wants us to remain active among the people (in rebus) and to learn to recognize the world, and not to be deterred from our actions by its ingratitude, but to follow our heavenly Father, who makes his sun rise daily over the good and over the evil, Matth. 5, 45.

And foolishness is in their heart while they live; after that they must die.

That is, they die without any work, as if they had never lived. They are shadows in this life, of no use to anyone, no one has a share in their services nor in their goods, and what they hope for in the future is not theirs.

1) Omnia inArLta, niliil tseiss VsrÜLNS [st. This is described in the Wittenberg edition as edr saying of Catullus.

is cut off by death. Therefore, their end is nothing but death. They leave nothing good for others; but you use life in such a way that you may both be happy and benefit others.

V. 4: For with all living things there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

From this passage Solomon begins an exhortation that we should do good as much as we can. We are not to be moved by the ingratitude of the world, but to continue in our duty and hold fast to hope, because there is still hope in all men; as if he wanted to say: Do not despise life so that you either despair or shun intercourse with men. For "hope" is "that which is desired," that is, the best thing with men is hope or confidence. For with those who are alive among men one can still have hope. Therefore you must do what you can, because because of a small remnant you must serve the whole multitude.

Thus, a good servant of the word of God preaches the word of God for the sake of a few good citizens, however many may reproach him. In the same way, if a teacher has two good students, he should work for their sake, even if he has twenty others who have bad qualities and from whom nothing can be hoped. The authorities should also act in this way; even if they cannot keep the whole city in their duty, they will still find one or two citizens with whom they can do something 2c. Now Solomon says this so that we may not be wearied by despair, but also not be presumptuous. For one should not despair of the living as much as of the dead, in regard to whom one can have no hope. One must suffer the unworthy nature of people and not despair of all, even if many are shameful people.

Because a living dog is better, neither a dead lion. He inserts a proverb, and wants to say: It is enough, if one only has a part in the

The world is better than a living dog, even though it is a despised animal, than the great corpse of an extremely strong lion. We express it like this: A sparrow in the hand is better than a crane still far away (sub dubio). Likewise in German: "One should not pour out the child with the bath."

V. 5, 6: For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know nothing, neither do they deserve anything any more; for their memory is forgotten, that they are no more loved, nor hated, nor envied; and have no more part in the world in anything that is done under the sun.

"The living", he says, "know that they will die", therefore they use this hope in life. Therefore, they should not postpone from day to day to work or to do good, as the foolish and the foolish do, who always look at the example of others and do not want to do right until they see others do right.

But the dead know nothing, they also earn nothing more.

Jerome has twisted this passage in an inconsistent way, and drawn on the reward of the dead in purgatory. For Solomon seems to think that the dead sleep in such a way that they know nothing at all. And I am completely of the opinion that there is no passage in Scripture that more strongly testifies to the fact that the dead sleep and know nothing of our affairs, and is more strongly opposed to the invocation of the saints and the invention of purgatory. But it is a Hebrew expression, "They deserve nothing," which we render in German thus, "It is in vain with them that are dead." All theirs is nothing, they no longer direct anything that could be of use there, as we read elsewhere: Your labor gets its reward [2 Cor. 3, 8.], and Paul says 1 Cor. 15, 58. "Your labor is not in vain."

That one no longer loves them, nor hates them (*amor quoque et odium*).

Understand everything [namely *amor quoque et odium*] in an active way, as above.

that is, the good deeds that they have done with loving, obeying, 2c., are consigned to oblivion. But what Jerome argues in a subtle way: Although the dead know nothing of what goes on in the world, they know other things that happen in heaven; this is erroneous and foolish.

And have no more part on the bet.

That is, they have no intercourse with us. He describes the dead as corpses without feeling. Therefore, he wants us to use life as much as it is allowed and to work as much as we are able. For we must leave the greatest part of the world to Satan; we can hardly obtain the thousandth part for God. Therefore, if the lion dies for you, the dog does not have to be killed as well.

V. 7. Go therefore and eat your bread with gladness, drink your wine with good courage; for your work pleases God.

As Solomon, after mentioning vanity in the world, is wont to add a consolation and exhortation that we should have a merry and quiet heart, so does he here, as if to say: Since we must live in such a perverse nature, it is best that we be cheerful and calm. For we cannot change these things, and will do nothing, however much we consume ourselves with sorrow. But he says: "Your bread" and "your wine", that is, which you have acquired through your work under God's blessing. Thus it is said in Isa. 4:1, "We will feed ourselves," and Paul writes to the Thessalonians [2 Ep. 3:12], "Each one eat his own bread."

For your work pleases God.

This exhortation is to the godly who fear God, as if to say: You who are godly, do what you are able, because you know that your works please God. This is the highest wisdom of the spirit, to know that we have a gracious God and one who likes our works and actions. Thus it is also said in Rom. 8:16: "His Spirit bears witness to our spirit that we are children of God." For

If our heart does not sink into God's will and good pleasure, it can never sweeten its bitterness; it always remains bitter if the heart is not filled with the divine good pleasure. But already this One saying could have served for the refutation of those which from the words set above [v. 1.], but which are badly translated [in the Vulgate]: "Man does not know whether he is worthy of love," 2c., have wanted to make men uncertain about the will of God toward us.

V. 8. Let your garments always be white, and let your head not lack ointment.

Solomon speaks according to the use of that country. The Romans and the Greeks praise the purple robe, the Orientals and especially the Jews the white robe, for the sake of ablutions and cleanliness, which they observed with great care, just as the Turk uses linen robes as the most delicious, and we have used them at the highest festivals under the pabstacy of the alb. Therefore he says: Always be cheerful, use these clothes, which you used to use at the time of banquets and feasts.

And let not thy head lack ointment.

That is, use also the ointments that God has given. Again, he speaks according to the custom of that people, among whom the ointments were counted among the highest pleasures. He therefore says: You live in the midst of vanity, therefore enjoy life, and do not corrupt yourself with indignation; take away sorrow from your heart. Thou canst not mock the world better than to laugh when it is angry; that be enough for thee, that thou hast a gracious GOD. For what is the wickedness of the world compared to the sweetness of God? But here he does not advise a life of pleasure and indulgence for those who do not feel this vanity (for that would be pouring oil on the fire), but he speaks of the godly who feel the drudgery and troubles of the world. He wants to lift up their depressed hearts. He advises them to be cheerful, not the stubborn and godless people, who otherwise are already absorbed in pleasures and pleasures. He does the same when he says:

V. 9. Use life with your wife, whom you love, as long as you have the vain life that God has given you under the sun, as long as your vain life lasts; for this is your portion in life and in your work that you do under the sun.

As if to say, "Surely thou bringest no more of it," as Paul says 1 Tim. 6:8: "If we have food and raiment, let us be content." But those who, not content with this, desire other things besides, and torment themselves with indignation over unpleasant and burdensome things, heap heartache upon heartache, vanity upon vanity, and at the same time deprive themselves of all goods.

V. 10. Whatever comes to your hand to do, do it freshly; for in hell, where you are going, there is no work, art, reason or wisdom.

This is the second part of the exhortation by which he confronts the idle who, because they see that the world is ungrateful and feel the hardship, do not want to work or do anything good. He therefore commands both, namely that we should be cheerful, but in such a way that we are not idle, but work according to the commandment of God, Gen. 3:19. Work should be there, the gnawing and distressing worries should be far away; the body should be made tired by work, but the heart should be free from worries and be satisfied with the present. In addition, take the third thing, that you do not weigh down and afflict your heart, because you see that the world is certainly ungrateful. But what is to be noted is that he says: "What comes before you", that is, do not direct your advice, but what is presently there, what God has commanded and offered, unconcerned about the future. But that he says, "Do this freshly," in this he demands diligence and care.

For in hell there is neither work 2c.

Another passage, which shows that the dead feel nothing, because (so he says) there is no thought, no art, no knowledge, no wisdom. Solomon has thus considered that the dead are completely asleep and are not able to feel anything.

from feeling anything. They lie there dead, counting neither days nor years, but will think, when they are raised, that they had hardly slept a moment. Hell, however, means the pit, the grave, but actually, as I believe, it means the hidden resting place (recessum) in which the dead sleep apart from this life, from where the soul goes to its place (whatever it may be, for it cannot be a bodily place), so that you must understand that hell is called here that where the souls are kept, and as it were a kind of grave for the soul outside this bodily world, as the earth is the grave of the body; But what it is, that is unknown to us. 1) Thus it is said in Gen. 42:38 [Vulg.], "I will go to hell with sorrow of heart." Likewise Gen. 44:29 [Vulg.], "You will take my gray hairs to hell with sorrow." For the true saints do not go to hell to suffer anything there. Therefore, the dead are outside of space (extra locum), because everything that is outside of this life has no place, just as we will not be bound to place and time after the resurrection. So also Christ is outside of space, [which I say] against those who put Christ captive in one place, while He is everywhere. For the Word of God cannot be separated from the flesh; where God is, there is also the flesh of Christ; but God is everywhere, therefore Christ is also everywhere.

V. 11. I turned and saw how it is under the sun, that to run is not to be swift, to fight is not to be strong, to eat is not to be skillful, to be rich is not to be wise; that a man may be pleasant is not that he may do a thing well; but all depends on time and fortune.

This is, as it were, the summa and conclusion of his register, as if he wanted to say: "It is not 2) up to what one can do." Do not, therefore, direct your counsels or your plans, but what your hand finds, that is, remain in the particular work that you are to do.

1) Erlanger: in ineognitum instead of: incoⁿitum.

2) Erlanger: nothing.

is laid down and commanded by God, and let go of the things that want to hinder you, as Samuel says to Saul [1 Sam. 10, 6. 7.]: "You will become a different man, and what comes under your hands, do that" 2c. He did not prescribe any law for him; but whatever matter comes up, you should take it and work on it. So Solomon also teaches here: Always stop with what you have in hand and what your profession entails. If you are a preacher or a minister of the word of God, keep reading the Scriptures and teaching, and do not turn to anything else until the Lord takes you away from it. For everything that the LORD has not said or commanded will be of no avail. He proves this by his experience, saying, "I have seen swift men who could not run the race, and many strong men who yet were not given the victory. Likewise, I have seen many admirably wise people who have not succeeded, many who have managed their affairs well and have been active, and yet have accomplished nothing. "It is not in the person, let him be as skilful as he will."

Often the strong are defeated in war by the weak, and great armies have often been defeated by lesser ones, because it is not because of strength. Thus the city of Troy was exceedingly strong and did not lack men and strength, and yet it was taken and destroyed. In the same way, a few years ago, the King of France was defeated and captured by Emperor Carl, while he was far stronger in crew and armor. That he says: "To run does not help to be fast" is a Hebrew way of speaking. For with them "to run" means to administer some office, as Paul says in the first letter to the Corinthians [Cap. 9, 26.]: "But I run thus, not as into the unknown." Likewise [2 Tim. 4, 7.]: "I have finished running" 2c.

That one is pleasant does not help that he is skillful.

That is, many understand excellent arts, are knowledgeable in good sciences, and yet remain despised. Nobody cares about

they, no one runs after them. So we also have enough of the word, enough of the gifted people, yet we cannot convert everyone to the faith. Nevertheless, we do not have to abandon the gospel. For the Lord reigns even in weakness, he himself will direct it, he himself will bring it about. The Lord is able to kindle a great fire and a flame, if we keep only a spark. We are also moved and plagued by many thoughts as to how we should acquire our food. One becomes a printer in order to become rich, and behold, he loses all his possessions. Therefore it is not enough for someone to be astute or wise. For many excellent minds and the best masters (artifices) are utterly despised. This is what he says:

But everything is due to time and luck.

That means: I cannot determine anything about the outcome or success, however much I may struggle. You only do what is your duty, God will find in his hour that he wants to use your work. We cannot judge these things; we should work, but not predetermine the end and the outcome.

V. 12. Neither knoweth man his time: but as the fish are taken with a noisome snare, and as the fowl are caught with a snare; so shall men be taken in the evil time, when it suddenly cometh upon them.

By "time" here understand not only the end of life itself, but every hour and the outcome, as if he wanted to say: You shall work, even though you do not know what will happen. Therefore, study; if God wills, He will give you prosperity and fruit through your study. Similarly, in all other actions and undertakings of life, we must work, but command God the outcome, for the hour of success is hidden from us.

And like the fish.

By two beautiful parables he proves that things are generally contrary to our advice.

and expectation. The fish desires the food and devours the seed; likewise the birds go safely into the net and eat, thinking of nothing less than the rope, and behold, suddenly they are caught. Thus we are deceived when we have chosen and hoped for good things; where evils seem to threaten us, good things are in store for us. And we plunge into things from which we cannot find our way out again afterwards, completely in such a way that we do not know how we got into them. But all this because the hour is unknown to us. Hence experience teaches us that things do not go according to our advice, but generally against our advice, for hence comes the word of those who have not been well advised: "I did not mean that!

V.13-16. I also saw this wisdom under the sun, which seemed great to me, that there was a small city, and few people in it; and a great king came and occupied it, and built great fortresses about it; and there was found in it a poor wise man, who was able to save that city by his wisdom; and no man remembered that poor man. Then I said, "Wisdom is better than strength. The poor man's wisdom was still despised, and his words were not obeyed.

I believe that this is set after the conclusion as an example by which he generally explains everything he has said before.

But it is a general example, the like of which is found in many histories. For so saved. Judg. 9, 53, a woman saved the city by killing King Abimelech by throwing a piece of a millstone on his head. He calls the wisdom a great one, because it is indeed a very great worldly wisdom to be able to protect a small city with few men from powerful enemies. By the way, that this wisdom and so great good deeds are forgotten, which happens most of the time, is an exceedingly great ingratitude. Thus Themistocles did much good to his fellow citizens, but experienced the highest ingratitude; thus David did good to all Israel, thus Solomon. After that, the ten tribes fell away from the house of David, unaware of the great good deeds they had done. Therefore to do good to the world is nothing else than to lose one's good deeds, or to throw gold into the dunghill, and pearls before swine. The best thing, therefore, is to be cheerful and work for the present, but cast away cares for the future. For it is better that my good deeds be lost than that I also perish with my good deeds, as Phaedria says in the Eunuchus [of Terence].

And no man remembered the same poor man 2c.

The words of the wise man have been heard, because he gave good advice, but afterwards they have forgotten his immediately.

The tenth chapter.

Cap. 9, 17. This means that the words of the wise are more valid among the silent than the shouts of the lords among the fools.

The sum of this passage is that Solomon wants to comfort and admonish those who preside over affairs, then also punish those who resist and cause the counsels of the godly and wise not to succeed, as he does then with the example of

The first thing that happened was that the poor man wisely did a great thing, but as soon as the good deed was done, it was forgotten. For one is weary of all that is present, as has been said above. Seeing this, I say, he will say: Do not trouble yourself; you cannot make the world different, not even men. If the thing does not succeed according to your good advice, then order it GoTte.

The words of the wise apply more to the silent 2c.

The words of the wise are not heard, therefore the fools must hear the words of a foolish prince. The shouting of lords is heard by fools, and the words of a foolish counselor are heard by a foolish prince, because he tells him what he pleases. This, I say, you must see, as it is also said in Proverbs (Cap. 18, 2.): A fool heareth not unless thou tell him that which is in his heart. The cause of this is this, that in the fool's heart his desire (adfectus) has the upper hand; therefore he will not listen to anything you may say, unless you tell him: that which he desires. For those who are previously taken in by their lusts or their wisdom do not listen. You will do nothing else; you will not be heard where there are not quiet hearts, that is, who are not blinded by their desires. So it does not help today that you write against the heretics or sacramentarians, because you do not accomplish anything. This is also what Paul said [Titus 3:10]: "Avoid a heretical man when he has been admonished once and again" 2c.

And it is so not only in the things concerning godliness, but also in the worldly government. In worldly matters, if you give wise counsel, you will not get anywhere, nor will you be heard, except by those who are not prejudiced (neutrals), who have a calm mind and are not biased. For quiet hearts and those who are at peace judge correctly that the shouting of the lords is foolish. Therefore, one must wait until the movements have subsided, for only then will one hear; just as turbid water is not transparent, but if one wants to see the bottom, the water must first clear up. Thus all those who have preconceived opinions in their hearts cannot be persuaded unless this preconceived opinion has settled down, by which they are held captive as by a spell. He has expressed the same elsewhere [Proverbs 17:12]: "It is better to meet a bear or a lioness whose cubs have been stolen than a fool in his folly."

Cap. 9, 18. "Wisdom is better than armor; but a few knaves destroy much that is good.

He proved this statement by the previous example. And today, all who have been involved in wars confirm the same, namely, that the weapons of war are nothing without wisdom and good counsel, and that wisdom is more effective in war than the force. For there are many, manifold and sudden incidents, such as ambushes, etc.; if they are not immediately met with unhesitating counsel, then it is all over for the multitude and the armament. Thus the Romans boast that they have conquered the whole world, not by their power, but by wisdom. Wisdom, therefore, is indeed the ruler on earth, but still she is not heard.

For a few knaves spoil many good things.

For in war as well as in peace there are always such harmful people who spoil everything. If some councilor takes good care of peace, soon another one, a knave or a glorified man (Thraso), overthrows everything, which one tries to resist in vain, because people are caught by their inclinations, which they follow. They do not listen to those who advise otherwise, as Homer 1) also said: The worse part generally keeps the upper hand (Pejor pars fere vincit).

Cap. 10, 1. Thus the harmful flies spoil good ointments.

A proverbial saying against fools. But Solomon sometimes has very hard transitions. The transition would have been more severe if he had added: "It is as they say in Proverbs. But the proverb is taken from the things that were in use among this people; ointments were counted among the most precious things among them. To us, however, this equation seems hard and cold, because we do not have the things and the use of this people. Just as dead flies

1) In the Erlanger: Inuius.

If the best ointment spoils, it is the same with any very good advice in the community, in the council, in the war: behold, some bad guy comes and destroys everything. As we now have to suffer the harmful flies, so we are also forced to suffer these pernicious counselors.

Therefore, sometimes foolishness (*parva stultitia*) is better than wisdom and honor.

This is a consolation against these accidents in the world and evil counselors. A little foolishness he calls that which lasts a short time, as the poets say, 1) that it is the highest wisdom to be foolish in due time (*in loco desipere*). Therefore, if you see that an ungodly knave has the upper hand in the deliberation, in the council 2c. renounce your counsel and leave your wisdom in place, because you see that it is not pleasant, and so that you do not torture yourself. It is better that you be a little foolish and let them continue in their foolishness. Because they do not hear you, you cannot force your way through, for a fool cannot be guided by any advice unless you tell him what is in his heart. Therefore you must let them go after you have given your advice and done what you can. For if you wanted to get through, you would provoke these hornets, you would meet the angry she-bear, and you would incur unnecessary dangers. This is very good advice for us, who have to manage in such an evil and ungrateful world, which does not listen to anything we advise, say or threaten.

"Glory" (*gloria*) does not only mean the good reputation, but also the goods, the splendor, the adornment, the riches, from which the good reputation comes. Thus it is said in Matth. 6, 30. 29.: God clothes the lilies of the field in such a way that even Solomon in all his glory (*gloria*) was not so clothed, that is, in all his riches and in all his splendor.

V. 2 For the heart of the wise is on his right hand, but the heart of the fool is on his left.

1) Horatii oüarum, Nd. IV, ocie XI, v. 29.

This, too, is spoken in proverbs; that is, the wise man rules his heart; if he sees those acting foolishly and they do not want to listen, he can abstain from counsel for a while. 2c. He can use his wisdom according to opportunity and persons, depending on whether he sees that his counsel will turn to the right or to the left. The fool, however, is not powerful of his heart, but thinks to break through according to his heart's inclinations. But it is something great if one can control and moderate his heart. No one has ever done this, nor can he do it, unless he knows the world and looks to divine judgment.

V. 3. Even if the fool himself is foolish in his actions, he still thinks everyone is a fool.

That is, he is not satisfied with his evil counsel, so that you are forced to yield to him, and even to suffer him to glory in his foolishness or evil counsel, and to heap invective on the wisdom of all others. For if thou hast given good counsel, he will straightway make a mockery of it, and slander that which is well said and well advised. But you answer: I have given advice, but do not force anyone to do so, and what I have thought good, I have said. First of all, the fool does not listen; secondly, he breaks through; and finally, he will ridicule and revile as foolish, as ungodly, everything you say against it (which you must certainly do, but nevertheless not in vain). We see and experience this in ourselves today.

V. 4. Therefore, if a mighty man's defiance goes against your will, do not be dismayed, for forbearance brings great misfortune.

This is what we Germans express by the saying: "He who is able to interrogate wants to be soap. 2) Therefore he says: If their spirit, that is, their defiance or counsel, should prevail, do not become impatient, do not leave your place, "stay with yourself, hold still." But if you oppose and do not want your counsel to be despised, you will

2) Thus in the Jena and the Erlangen. Wittenberg: "He who can interrogate becomes a wise man." The latter version has the Jenaer at the edge.

dn only grasp into a wasps' nest and lure against the sting, because that is a great piece of wisdom, that one translates or follows. For this quiets very great unhappiness, which in such a way is quelled by being calm, that is, by yielding, and finally comes to an end all by itself, whereas otherwise it would cause great unrest if you continued to oppose it. Thus the Romans boast of their Fabius that he deprived Hannibal of victory by his hesitation (fregerit). Thus our Elector Frederick of Saxony subdued and smelled the Erfurtians, who aroused sedition, by silence. So also Virgil says: 2) *Superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est* [Every fate can be overcome by suffering¹]. For these sayings are taken from the midst of experience in human affairs.

V.5-7. There is a calamity that I have seen under the sun, that is, a foolishness common among the mighty, that a fool sitteth in great dignity, and the rich are fools in the world. I saw servants on horses, and princes walking on foot, like servants.

He says: "It is not to be wondered at if there is a defiance or a counsel of fools against the wise and those who counsel rightly. For I see that among the princes people are rare who are not fools themselves and also give evil advice to things. Thus the fool rules everywhere; he has his being in the council, in the courts of princes 2c. The world is foolish and is ruled by fools and foolish opinions; if you advise otherwise, it will not hear you. If you go through, the fool will only become more irritated, and out of defiance will do what is to the detriment of the whole country.

By the rich, of whom he says that they sit in the dust, he understands those who should be in the regiment, and who are also well able to govern. But by servants he calls those who should be governed, as if he were to say

wanted: Those who should be governed, I see governing and in high position; namely, those servants and fools. But the wisest I see in poverty, and that they have scarcely any bread. Therefore, if thou seest such centauros and glorious men reigning, who should rightly serve thee, let it not surprise thee. Think that this is the kingdom of the world.

V. 8, 9: But he that maketh a pit shall fall therein; and he that breaketh the fence shall be stung by a serpent. He who rolls away stones will have trouble with them, and he who splits wood will be hurt by them.

Here Solomon inserts, as it were, a collection of proverbs, all of which he applies to experience in the affairs of the world, as if to say: In human affairs it is as these proverbs say. Whatever you may undertake in affairs, there befalls you what is said, "He that maketh a pit," 2c., that is, "Without harm you cannot get away." Likewise, when you have to govern people, it is the same as when you have to break through a fence, where it often happens that you are stung by a snake. Therefore, even if evil befalls you, do not desist for its sake, but remember that human affairs are no different. For the governing of men is in the hands of God alone. Therefore, he who is placed in a governmental office should know that he has to deal with such matters that cannot be governed by any human council. For human hearts are not in our power; only those who have the fear of God are easily governed.

But the proverb is taken from those who dig graves, to whom it happens that they often fall into them unawares. When conducting human affairs is as much as digging a pit, you should be warned and know that you will not be without danger. If you do not, you will run into much more serious and unforeseen dangers. For dangers that are foreseen are less severe. In Terence's *Phormio*, Demipho has wisely used this reminder.

1) Erlanger: tain6ii instead of: tanätzil.

2) Virgin ^611618, lik. V, v. 710.

3) stultis 6t is missing in the Erlanger.

than when he says: Therefore all, if it goes well, must especially consider with themselves how they may bear the repugnant fate, dangers, harm, banishment. When someone returns from a journey, he should always remember that it is possible that either his son has gone wrong, or his wife has died, or his daughter has fallen ill; all this is something ordinary, it can happen, so that it is nothing new to his mind. Everything good that happens to us contrary to expectation we should regard as gain, so that when such an adversity occurs, you can say: I expected this, and think that nothing against the world's course will happen to you; indeed, if something good happens to you, you should regard it as a daily gain. For this reason, even if someone falls into the ditch unawares, one must not immediately turn away from it. For human life is full of dangers. And as in the breaking of a fence there is often the danger that a hidden snake may sting, so in the government of things you must take care that you are not hurt; but if you are stung and hurt, you must bear it. For nothing new will happen to you.

Who rolls away stones.

He who rolls stones easily injures his hand or feet. For he means larger stones, which cannot be moved from one place to another without often injuring oneself badly. Thus it means that one must govern human affairs, rolling a stone. Therefore, if you are injured, say: If I had not rolled stones, I would not have been injured, but because I carry them away and roll them, it is not surprising if I am injured. If you are a householder, think that you also have a stone to roll. Similar is what follows:

Whoever splits wood will be hurt by it.

That is, governing is not without danger and injury. Therefore, it is best that the heart be prepared and expect some accidents, so that when something succeeds in the commonwealth, it is considered a miracle, as it were. The more unexpected the good is, the more it pleases the heart.

Just as the more foreseen the evils are, the less they hurt. Therefore, we should always remember that we have to work under dangers, not in well-being.

V. 10 If an iron becomes blunt and the edge remains unsharpened, it must be sharpened again with power; thus wisdom also follows diligence.

Again, he comforts those who are in government. As iron, when rust has got the upper hand, is smoothed with difficulty and given a sharpness, so the world is an iron eaten through with rust and a kind of crooked axe stuck loosely to the handle, which no one can well govern. This is a beautiful similitude. And just as it is tremendous work and misery to hew with a rough and rusty axe, so it is also miserable and pitiful to govern the world, to manage the community or the household. For it is a wicked and useless instrument, and yet we must handle in such and with such. Thus, since men are wicked and full of evil inclinations, great wisdom is needed to govern and direct them.

Therefore he says: When the iron has become rusty or dull, and the rust has got the upper hand, there remains only that a good master is there, that is: "There must be a good master who wants to sharpen an old rusty axe well. Thus it is necessary that there be a wise man who can make good use of such evil things, that is, of the world and of such wicked and perverse men. Men are by nature despisers, but God has added his prestige [to that of the authorities] so that men may at least obey in this way. For he says: I want you to obey this one; now if you do not obey, you also despise me. But even so they still do not obey.

So the worldly regiment or the household is nothing else than such a rusty iron. Therefore, use the axe you have if you cannot use any other, as the saying goes, "He who has no lime must build with dirt or glue." If you are a householder, or

in a magisterial office, think that you have a rusty iron (that is, such people who do not want to be governed, nor can be governed); use it and cut with it what you can, so that you at least keep or restore to some extent a piece or shape of the commonwealth. For it will not be possible to do so well in human affairs that most of the ills will not remain. Therefore there must be a good master, 1) who sharpens the old rusty iron so that it can be used to some extent. This is what should comfort us in human affairs.

V. 11. A washer is nothing better than a serpent that stings without being sworn.

This also belongs to the government of commonwealths. He says: As a snake stings, which is not summoned, that is, without being known or unawares (because a summoned snake does not sting, because it obeys the voice of the summoner), so also a washer stings, and a washer is nothing better than a stinging snake, that is, whoever is not powerful of his tongue, reviles his regent (rectori) or the one who is in charge of him. For this is how it is in the worldly regiment or also in the household. If you are a householder, you will do many things that displease your wife, your servants, 2c. Among them you will also find people who disparage and blaspheme the good you do, but what you do badly, they will gossip about and carry around among your fellow citizens and neighbors. And you must also suffer this. You will resist it to the best of your ability, but what you cannot prevent, you must bear. It is indeed annoying and difficult to be so disgracefully taunted by the tongues of malicious people, even if you do not know it; but what can you do? You can't stop these insults, and those who speak ill of you. Just close your eyes and ears, and do as much as you can. So we must suffer that we are resisted by words and works, for the world does not cease from persecuting the authorities and those who exhort to what is right.

1) Erlanger: she instead of: sit.

V. 12: The words of a wise man's mouth are pleasant, but the lips of a fool devour them.

That is, the wise man puts his words rightly and sweetly, but because he is in the midst of evil tongues, he does not succeed. For the slanderer comes and devours him; he showers the good man with his words. Thus I refer the word "the same" to the wise man, not to the fool. For the blessed word of the wise man is made vain by the lips of fools. If any good and wise man counsels in the best way, a blasphemer and a knave will come and overthrow it. This is what happened to Paul, as reported in the Acts of the Apostles [Cap. 27, 21]. When they were shipwrecked, he said, "Dear men, I ought to be obeyed, and not to have broken out of Crete. "2c. Summa Summarum: The fool devours the wise, and the worse part always keeps the upper hand.

V. 13. The beginning of his words is foolishness and the end is harmful foolishness.

That is to say, the fools who want to be wise and regard all others as fools are like that, whether they begin or end; and their whole speech is also pure foolishness. And the more a fool wants to be wise, the more nonsensical he is; and yet he keeps the upper hand over the wise, and devours his best counsels, as the Pharisees kept the upper hand over Christ, who nevertheless taught in the best way; the Jews and the false apostles over the apostles. The Arians devoured the good teachers. And we preach Christ today, but heretical persecutors come and devour us; but we expect even greater things. In the meantime, we consider it a gain that we still retain some good things, that some still hold on to the right doctrine.

V. 14. A fool makes many words.

A wise man teaches with few words and says briefly what his opinion is. For the speech of truth is simple. But fools make many words, neither can they be silenced, or so refuted with words, that they should be silent; for one thing

they answer a thousand. Thus Christ always answered the scribes and Pharisees in a few words, when they blasphemed that His teaching was not from God but from the devil.

For man does not know what has been, and who will tell him what will come after him?

That is, man does not see what is there, what is before his eyes; never is he satisfied with what is present, always looking out for strange and future things, leaving what is given and prescribed to him by GOD. Now the gospel is given, but behold, we are carried away to other things. But this has been said more abundantly before.

V. 15. The work of the fools becomes sour for them, because one does not know how to go into the city.

That is, though fools have lain down and spoken many words, they accomplish nothing, nor do they gain anything, except that they make much of their labors and increase their toil. They toil by day and by night, anxious to do their best. But this work brings them nothing but more toil. And these two juxtapositions are to be noted: The fool has misery in his work, the wise man cheerfulness. 1) For when the fool sees that his undertaking has no progress, he has a troubled heart, for he cannot and does not know how to command GOtte to prosper. The wise man, however, has the same heart at both times, because he knows that things are not governed by our counsels or actions, but by the will of God. To this he also commands the prosperity and success of his counsels.

Because you do not know how to go to the city.
A Hebrew expression, as in the Psalms [Ps. 107, 4. Vulg.]: "And they found not the way to the city," that is, they wander about without knowing the way, that they may come where they may rest. Because all

If the paths are designed to lead to some place where people live, but they miss the way completely, they do not remain stable in anything, while the wise remain on the path and keep their place, even though they run into many dangers and obstacles, because they foresaw that this would be the case. Therefore, let each one work and labor with a cheerful heart. But he will work with a cheerful heart who knows that he is in the world, in dangers 2c. In this way the evil will be overcome before it comes.

V. 16. Woe to the land, whose king is a child, and whose prince eats early.

So far we have heard that in human affairs the fools mainly have the upper hand and rule, although to their great misfortune, when they have suppressed the words of the wise, they themselves have to suffer the punishments of their foolishness. Since this is the case, it is very dangerous for a child to be a prince, if among so many fools, of whom everything is full, even the king is not wise. This is the regiment (regnum) in Germany and Spain today, where the princes, who are considered the wisest, direct and carry out everything for their own benefit and seek their own. The others know nothing but ride on stallions, whore, drink, etc., leaving everything to the rulers, who seek their own and do not care about the commonwealth. And the whole of Germany is, as it were, a desert in which there are no polite customs, no care for the education of the young; the laws, discipline and good arts have fallen away, no administration of justice.

A good prince is a great gift, who considers and understands what is useful for his country, who has a good view of what is due to everyone, so that everything is done and administered according to the laws, and every person gets his right. But not everything turns out well for him either; indeed, many things turn out quite differently; yet for this reason he should not abandon his purpose, but continue to be active as much as he is able, in the same way as was said above. For thus was Solomon a very good and wise prince, or

1) The words: "The fool - merriment" are missing in the Erlanger.

King, so that he also wrote proverbs for the instruction of the youth; nevertheless, he has had nothing but troubles and much work from it. Therefore, if even the best princes do not succeed, what will happen when the king is a child and does nothing worthy of a prince?

The prince's early meal.

That is, those who do not distribute the work, who do not care that the affairs of the kingdom are managed, but only that they themselves have good days. Yes, if there are some who wish to advise the things and the princes well, they are oppressed by such people. "Early" therefore denotes the same thing as "in the first place" or "above all". For "early" is the first hour of work or activity. But these eat early, that is, first they take care of themselves, seek their profit, and supply their belly; the affairs of the realm they set aside until the evening, and deal with those in the last place.

V. 17: Blessed is the land, whose king is noble (*filius sapientum*), and whose princes eat in due season, for strength and not for pleasure.

They are Hebrew ways of speaking: A child of death, a child of life, a child of the year. So here: A child that is, of the noble ones, which has, that is, distinguished people (for the Hebrew "child" we generally 1) connect with the verb "has", as is said of Pharaoh in Isaiah 2) [Cap. 19, 11.]: "I am the child of the wise", that is, I have many wise men). But it means XXXXX the whites. For it was the custom of the people in the Orient to use white garments, as the Romans used the purple robe and the state dress (*trabea*). From the dress, which the princes carry, they are called therefore the whites (*candidi*), as with the Romans some *Torquati* [from *torques*, the necklace] were called.

And eat the prince at the right time.

That is, those who do not prefer their bellies to the affairs and cares of the realm, who do not seek their own; but where do you find them? Avarice rules at court, the great themselves find nothing but avarice. So you see it with our princes, where the principalities are sucked dry and the great and nobles grow rich. Because of the harmful great ones, we can do nothing to care for the poor, to establish schools, to provide poor virgins with a dowry, and to do such godly works, while they themselves extort everything possible from the princes. Truly, therefore, "good for the country whose princes eat for strength and not for pleasure," that is, those who enjoy the generosity of the prince in such a way that they have their food, that they can maintain themselves and their family, not that they accumulate excessive treasures.

V. 18 (For through laziness the beams sink, and through negligent hands the house becomes dripping).

He adds a proverbial saying as if he wanted to say: In such a kingdom, where the princes or the great seek their own, and the king is a fool, it is as with a negligent householder, who, while he could with a penny 3) see to it that the beams of the building are not damaged, does not do so until the whole house suffers damage. Where, therefore, there is not an industrious father of the house, who daily restores when something has fallen to pieces, one damage always follows another; but an industrious father of the house soon mends what has become defective, and not only preserves what he has, but also restores and renews what has been broken, and adds something in the way of things and ornament. But what he says of the house, he wants to be understood of the whole household. As a building decays when it is neglected, so the whole household decays when it is neglected. A diligent householder is always concerned that he should be better,

1) We have followed here the reading of the Wittenberg edition, which offers here; Jena and Erlangen: *vsro*.

2) In the Latin editions:

instead

of:

3) Erlanger: *rriowento* instead of: *nummo*.

A rotten one is always trying to ruin. Thus, many bishoprics and principalities have crumbled because no one has restored them, no one has laid a hand on them. He who despises the little things gradually ruins everything. A householder must be both frugal and generous, not neglecting even the smallest things, so that he may give abundantly where it is necessary to give, because the greatest things grow out of the smallest.

Our Prince Frederick managed his household as an extremely praiseworthy father of the house in such a way that he seemed to be dirtily stingy, for he allotted to each individual his own, to the cooks, cellar masters, etc., but to the guests, who had to be given, he let everything be given in abundance, which he would not have been able to do if he had not managed it through thriftiness. And so he had a very well-stocked house and servants. Thus even a prince, if he does not pay attention to one or two usurers or other public malefactors, will finally come to the point where he punishes no one at all and the whole community goes to ruin. In the same way, the Roman leaders in war wanted that no enemy should be despised, not even the least. Summa Summarum: Where there is a foolish king, there is also a foolish administration and such an empire, which must necessarily perish. For in the worldly regime, it is the same as in the

Housekeeping, and if you let the house become dripping, it is the same as letting the house go to ruin.

V. 19. That makes, they make bread to laugh, and the wine must delight the living.

That is to say, these harmful people, gluttons, gurguliones, earn their pay through no righteous service, but only with worthless things and works; through flattery, fox-tails and drinking they accumulate riches. Such people make up the majority at the courts of princes; indeed, among four hundred, there are barely four or five who earn their pay with serious and honest service, through which the commonwealth can be advised.

And the wine must please the living.

As if he wanted to say: They provide nothing but that they eat and drink well; they are of no use to the princes but that they empty their cellars and burden them with unnecessary costs.

And the money must bring them everything.

This is what we actually say in German: "Es ist alles ums Geld zu thun. They look at money everywhere, whether it benefits or harms the community and the rich.

1) Jenaer: ipki instead of: isti.

The eleventh chapter.

Cap. 10, 20. Do not curse the king in your heart, and do not curse the rich man in your bedchamber; for the birds of the air carry the voice, and the fitties repeat it.

The previous chapter was a kind of attack on fools and a description of the kingdom of the world, how it is constituted, so that everyone who has to do with the government may realize that he is a very unholly kingdom.

I have to administer the office. But this, I say, is the highest wisdom, that one may know that this kingdom of the world is all full of wickedness and cannot be corrected. But this chapter exhorts to good works. For when it is taught how wicked the kingdom of the world is, men's hearts begin to be displeased, and they think of withdrawing from the work of affairs, and of leaving the world, having been overcome by the wickedness of men, like

is also said above. But Solomon teaches that the more wicked and unreasonable the world is, the more one must stop and work so that at least something will happen.

And first of all, he begins by saying that one should honor the authorities. For 1) The authorities are God's order and the best part of the world or under the sun. And by this order God directs everything that happens under the sun. The wicked, however, begin primarily by despising the authorities, since they hear that God punishes them in the Scriptures. But it is God's office to chastise and punish the authorities. Even though you hear this, you must not do it too, for you are not God or the one who made the divine order or who is to establish it, but as God punishes those, so he also punishes you in Scripture, so that you too may carry out your office. But thou forgettest the beam in thine eye, and beginest to see the mote in another's eye, and to punish the rulers, by whom rather thou shalt be punished. And if you had their office upon you, you would miss far more, and not even accomplish what those accomplish. Therefore, let us hear God rebuke the authorities, but do not imitate God in this.

So the meaning is: I have said many things about princes, how they corrupt the world, but you do not curse the king with you or in your heart, nor the rich man in your bedchamber. That is, those who are ordained to violence are to be honored, because it is not a human order, but God's order. Although Peter fl. Ep. 2,13. Vulg.^{4j} calls the authorities a human creature, because one receives the office from men, nevertheless their authority is a divine one, and if the authorities are also bad, one must honor them nevertheless because of the order of God. Why would you therefore curse them, who toil with so many and such great cares and labors for the sake of your peace, if they are good; but if they are evil and foolish, their ungodliness is and brings them misfortune enough; therefore rather pity them. But this does not happen; on the contrary, the world does the opposite: it repays ingratitude to the good,

others she curses, the fools she praises; yes, the pious are torn away from the lands.

Summa: we cannot bear ourselves or others, neither happiness nor misfortune. When God tempts us with minor afflictions, be it with sickness or with poverty 2c., we become impatient, accusing God 2c. But when He lets us go after our lusts, we cannot bear even that. Great is the divine patience that can bear us in the face of such great ingratitude. Therefore, we too should stop cursing the authorities and show them honor, whether they be good or evil. Give thanks to God if they are good, bear suffering and tolerate it if they are evil. But those who are in the office of the word may punish; not the common people.

For the birds of the air carry the voice, and those that have fittige (vir alarum), saying after.

A bird is called by the Hebrews "a man of the fitties" or a husband of the wings, or one who has wings. But he means to say, If you curse the king, it will not be hidden but will be known, and you will be punished. For [Proverbs 16:14, 15] "the king's wrath is death, his mercy an evening rain."

Cap. 11, 1. Let your bread go over water, and you will find it for a long time.

Again a Hebrew way of speaking, as Solomon is rich in images. He wants to say: Be generous to everyone, if you can; use your wealth for good wherever you can. And he adds a promise: "For if you live long, you will receive it back a hundredfold. Thus it is said in Proverbs [Cap. 19:7], "He that hath mercy on the poor lendeth unto the Lord." So also Christ says [Luc. 6:36.], "Pray, and it shall be given you." And Paul says [2 Cor. 9:7], "A cheerful giver is loved by God." He that would become poor, let him give nothing to others. Therefore he says, "Let your bread go," that is, share the food the Lord has given you.

l) Erlanger: Hui instead of: Huia.

Over water.

That is, give with a simple heart and abundantly, even if it seems as if your good deed is lost and the bread falls into the water. For Solomon uses this image only to indicate that you, who are mortal yourself, feed mortals.

So you will find it for a long time.

That means: If you live for a long time, you will find the bread again, which you let pass over the water, as if he wanted to say: That which thou hast given to others shall not perish, though it seem to be lost; rather, the LORD shall give thee bread for a long time. Ps. 37:26: "He is always merciful, and lendeth gladly." Likewise v. 19: "In the time of trouble they will have enough," because God does not suffer to be outdone in abundant giving, but in an infinite way makes our generosity stand back against His.

V. 2. divide among seven and among eight, for you do not know what calamities will come on earth.

Here he exhorts again, and adds to the exhortation a threat. He says: Divide your bread either among seven or among eight, that is, give abundantly. For (so Paul says [2 Cor. 9:6.]), "He that soweth in blessing shall also reap in blessing; he that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly." "Let not thou think thyself too much that thou givest"; though thou hast given all, yet shalt thou not become poor; only give of thine own, and that what thou givest may be there, as Christ says in the Gospel.

For you do not know what misfortune 2c.

That is, it may be that you die tomorrow and have to leave yours to the most unworthy people, or suddenly another accident occurs, that you are sorry for not having used or given your goods, and then, if you would like to, you cannot. Therefore give, if thou hast or canst, thou canst not know what the evening may bring. For when princes heap up treasures, they do nothing else but that they may have great wealth.

The rich gather together a lot, which gives rise to quarrels and disagreements.

V. 3. When the clouds are full, they give rain on the earth.

These are all exhortations and threats. When the clouds, that is, the poor, are filled, they pour the rain upon the earth. 1) This can be understood in two ways; first, imitate the clouds that pour out rain when they are full; so do you, pour out on the poor. Secondly, that it is a promise, which I like better, that is, if you have money and goods, give to those who are like an unseen cloud and have nothing. These clouds, I say, fill, and thou shalt see that thou shalt also be filled. Now follows the threat:

When the tree falls, it falls at noon or midnight, on which place it falls, there it remains.

That means: You do not know how long you will live and possess goods, like a tree, when it is cut down, may it fall at noon or midnight, remains lying there. So you too, under whatever circumstances death will cut you down, in whatever place, in whatever condition, will remain lying there. If the Lord finds you at noon, that is, as a fruitful tree abounding in good works, good for you; but if he finds you at midnight, that is, not abounding in good works, woe to you! As you are found, so you will be judged and also receive your reward.

V. 4: He who watches the wind does not sow, and he who watches the clouds does not reap.

This is also part of the exhortation. We would say in German instead, "Whoever is afraid of the bushes will never enter the forest." It seems to him who gives that he will keep nothing in the house, but will lose everything. This is the reason why we are so reluctant to give. Therefore says

1) Jonah aptly rendered the meaning of this phrase: "if you give to them, it will be amply repaid to you."

He: If you fear poverty and ingratitude, you will never prosper; he who does not look at the word of the Promiser, but only at the money and goods he has given, does not believe that he will feed himself or have enough. Therefore, look to the word of God and the promises; man does not live by bread alone. I say, if thou wilt hearken unto his word, he will bless thee in the field, in thy house 2c.

Therefore he who watches the wind does not sow, and he who watches the rain does not reap. For in harvest the rain is not good; but one waits for serene onward, and reaps no sooner than this has come. They say, I would gladly give, if I saw that I lacked nothing. You want to give only of that of which you have no need, but you should know that the poor man should eat with you, that you should rather deprive yourself of something, so that he may not lack. But he who does not believe the Lord does no good. He that continueth in the word continueth in the work.

V. 5. Just as you do not know the way of the wind, and how the bones are prepared in the womb, so you cannot know the work of God that He is doing everywhere.

Solomon uses a great abundance of words in his exhortation to wake us up from our sleepiness and sluggishness. He says: "Just as you do not know what the way of the wind is, and how the bones are prepared, 2c., so you do not know the work of God, which he does everywhere or in all, you do not know what he will decide about you or another, whether you will die tomorrow or whether you will live, or whether you will be sick, or what evil will befall you. If God had let us know how long or how short our life would be, we would be exceedingly bad in every way. Now we also do not know one hour of our life beforehand, and yet we still do not refrain from doing evil. Christ uses the same simile in John 3:8: "You hear the sound of the wind, but you do not know from where it comes.

or where he is going." So you also do not know where you will go or where you are going. As you feel the present wind, so you use the present things.

And how the bones are prepared 2c.

Thus, he says, animals and men are formed in the womb without you knowing it. Ps. 139:15: "My bones were not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret." And the whole 139th Psalm teaches this [v. 1.], "O Lord, thou searchest me. "2c. And if the womb were open, yet we would not see how this proceeded, because the trees grow, in that we all see it, and yet we do not see how the leaves, the branches, the fruits grow, neither can we indicate any reason for it. So we also grow while others see it. Since we do not understand what is present and before our eyes, how can we know what is to come? The sum, then, is: The works of God are not known to us, and what is to come is uncertain.

V. 6. Sow your seed early, and do not turn away your hand in the evening; for you do not know whether this or that will come to pass; and if either comes to pass, so much the better.

This he says not only of agriculture, but in general of all human works, but especially of doing good, as Paul says [Gal. 6:10]: "Therefore, since we have time, let us do good." "Early," that is, in due season, or always being active. Cause:

For you do not know whether this or that will be advised 2c.

You sow and do what you owe, but command God your works and their counsel. Do good to all, pay no attention to the winds, and do not worry about what will be done. This is the way to do the works, and not to look at gratitude. "If the world gives no thanks, give thanks to God; if both come, it is so much better." But if dangers should come, be ready to accept them.

We see, therefore, that Solomon in that whole

The next thing is to teach us the custom of present things and to prepare us against future dangers and accidents, so that when they come, we may accept them as something we are used to. What follows are applauses or rather good wishes, as we are wont to add in German to our sermons or exhortations in such a way: "Would to God that it were so!"

V. 7: The light is sweet, and the sun is pleasant to the eyes.

This is a simile (allegoria). He wants to say: It would be something lovely if someone would give an example of this teaching, if the princes of the people and the people themselves would follow the teaching that I have taught and teach in this book.

V. 8: When a man lives a long time and is happy in all things, he only remembers the evil days, that there are so many of them, because all that he has encountered is vain.

This, as I have said, is only a good wish, as if to say, "I should like to see the age that would have kept this book; that would be a fine man!" As lovely as the sun is, and as pleasant as the light, it is lovely to see a well-tried man who would have experienced this for many years with a cheerful heart, despising the world in peril. He would see a lot of darkness, that is, misfortune in the world, but that would delight him, that he could despise these things, since he knew and foresaw long before that this is how the world is.

The twelfth chapter.

Cap. 11:9 So rejoice, young man, in your youth, and let your heart be of good cheer in your youth.

After describing a rare bird, namely such a man who has lived all the time of his life with a cheerful heart and has laughed at the incoming evils or the wickedness of the world, he now adds an admonition. Therefore, says he, thou youth, who knowest not the world, if thou wilt live cheerfully, hear what I write and teach thee, lest thou go too far. Live in such a way that you are a despiser of the world and overcome its wickedness. And here you see what he calls "despising the world"; not that we flee the world or men, but have our intercourse in the world in the midst of dangers, but in such a way that we keep a calm and quiet heart even in all kinds of adversities. Therefore he says: If you want to reach this goal, that you have a calm heart in the midst of adversities, then get used to the adversities, and that from childhood; because then you will surely expect any dangers.

And let your heart gnter be things.

That is, cheerfully enjoy the pleasant things when they are there; do not let adversity, when it comes, make you despondent. This is how youth should be taught and instructed, and if young people do not follow such a reminder, they will never accomplish anything worthy of a man. For youth is inflamed with passions and inexperienced, and this inexperience prevents them from later bearing or yielding to the malice and ingratitude of the world. Therefore, Solomon is a very good teacher of youth. He does not forbid mirth or revelry, as the foolish teachers, the monks, did. For this is nothing other than making young people into insensate lumps, and (as the most monastic monk Anselm also said) planting a tree in a narrow pot. In this way, they locked their own in a cage, as it were, and prevented them from seeing people and talking to them, so that they learned nothing or experienced nothing, while yet

nothing is more dangerous for youth than loneliness.

The mind must be taught with good attitudes and opinions, so that the young people are not corrupted by living together and dealing with bad people; but in the body they must have to deal with the affairs. They must see and hear the world, but there must be a good teacher. Therefore, sadness and loneliness must be avoided by young people. Young people need joy as much as they need food and drink. For the body thrives on a cheerful mind. And education must begin not with the body but with the mind, lest the latter be neglected. When the hearts are properly instructed, the bodies are easily governed. Therefore, youth must be taught to be cheerful, and young people must do everything with a cheerful heart; only care must be taken that they are not corrupted by the lusts of the flesh. For drunkenness, carousing, and lechery are not the gladness of heart of which he speaks here, but rather make the heart sad.

Do what your heart desires and what pleases your eyes; and know that God will bring you to judgment for all this.

This passage has caused me to think that this whole text, from the beginning of the chapter, is ironically spoken, because it is almost as if it were ill-spoken that someone should do what his heart desires; but one must remain with the matter of which it deals and with the context of the text. He means to say, therefore, that if the heart is rightly instructed, no joy or gladness will harm, if it be only a right joy, and not a corrupting or even afflicting gladness, of which we said just before. "And please your eyes," that is, what presents itself to your eyes, enjoy it; do not let yourself be referred to things to come, lest you become like the monks, some of whom, like the monk Sylvanus, taught that one should not even look at the sun. They wanted to deprive the young people of sight, hearing, speech and all the senses,

and lock them up like birds in a box, these completely godless and misanthropic people. But you, when there is something pleasant to see, to hear 2c., enjoy it, only do not sin against God. Do not make laws for yourself in these things, but enjoy all things only with the fear of God. See that you do not follow the perverse lusts of the world, which corrupt your heart. This is how far the one part goes.

Cap. 11, 10. Put away sadness from your heart, and put away evil from your body, for childbed and youth are vain.

As if to say: As I will keep thee by the fear of God, that thou follow not shameful and hurtful lusts; so will I keep thee from being troubled with sadness, and from being pressed down by adversities. Therefore, tear out anger from your heart, that is, get into the habit of not being angry and not being overcome by indignation when you see that everything is very evil. When something distressing occurs, know that it is so in the world. Let others envy, hate, but do not do it, for this destroys a pleasant life, as Proverbs says [Proverbs 14:30], "Envy is pus in legs"; for envy is a gnawing and consuming disease. Keep your heart whole for me, and do not corrupt it by the excessive pleasures of the world, nor by sadness 2c.

Remove the evil from your body.

That is, remove everything that can hurt your body; not that he forbids you to mortify the flesh, but your affliction is in vain if you toil and trouble yourself with such things. Therefore do not frown so, but assume a cheerful countenance; only see to it that you fear God. For a cheerful mine indicates a cheerful heart. And as I want you to be joyful in heart, so I also want your body to be well.

Because childhood and youth is vain.

That is, remember that you are a youth and are completely in a life of vanity.

You will find yourself in the middle of the world. For youth is vain in itself and is carried away by many passions. Therefore, be wise and do not pour oil on the fire, as they say. Do not love things, nor deceive yourself about them, but be happy and enjoy them. And get used to it in youth, so that you may know it in old age. For those who have lived quietly and sweetly in youth will also come to a sweet old age.

Cap. 12:1 Remember your Creator in your youth, before the evil doge come, and the years come, when you shall say, They please me not.

All this, he says, I say for this reason, because I want you to be free from all youthful lusts, to honor God and to use the things that are given to you by Him. "Before the evil days come," that is, before you grow old. For old age is in itself a disease, though no other disease is added to it. For the aged lose freshness of mind and body. But he describes old age with many words and images: old age has only evil days and is not fit for regiment.

V. 2: Before the sun and the light, the moon and the stars become dark, and the clouds return after the rain.

The light signifies happiness, the darkness gloom and misfortune, as [Ps. 112, 4.]: "To the pious the light rises in the darkness." Therefore he wants to say: "Before the unhappy time of old age comes, when neither the sun is pleasing nor the light is pleasant, the clouds return after the rain, that is, there is a constant sadness and gloom. In the other ages of life, in youth, in manhood 2c., there is a certain alternation of joy, and after the storm comes again cheerful weather, after the gloom cheerfulness; but with the old people rain follows the clouds, "one misfortune upon another, one weather upon another." So also the poets have said that old age is sad.

V. 3. at the time when the keepers in the house tremble.

These are descriptions and paintings of old age. He wants to say: Get used to the ills of old age.

Live in the fear of God before the guardians of the house tremble, that is, before the hands tremble. For the hands are the protectors of the body, just as Aristotle also calls the hand the most excellent tool, because it does various services, serves all the other members, while the other members have their special services. But our body is a kind of house, in which one can find the worldly and the house regiment, whose king is the head, the hands the guardians 2c.

And bend the strong.

That is, when the thighs stagger, the knees shake. For strength is attached to the bones and the legs, as Ps. 147:10: "The LORD hath no pleasure in any man's legs."

And the millers stand idle that so little has been made of them.

Old age is toothless. The teeth are now the millers of the food, because the mouth is the mill. "It grinds badly where the teeth have fallen out."

And darken the faces through the windows.

That is, when the eyes can see little in front of them. For old age has dark eyes. Because all the sensory powers decrease in old people.

V. 4. and the doors of the street are closed, and the miller's voice is hushed.

That is, the mouth is hanging and trembling, for the mouth is the door of the heart. Matth. 15, 19: "Out of the heart come evil thoughts" 2c. Then the throat encloses the voice, so that it becomes small; that is, the doors are closed. For the two lips are the doors or the gate through which our heart goes out, as through a door into the street. This door is closed in old people, so that they cannot sing, cannot shout, cannot speak, and can hardly catch their breath.

And awakens when the bird fingeret, and bends down all the daughters of the song.

That is, they not only talk with difficulty, but they also do not sleep well. Because

Since the juices have dried up, which happens with old people, the root and cause of sleep is missing. For sleep gets its nourishment from these juices. Therefore they become awake at every bird call, while the young people are fast asleep. Not only the crowing of roosters or the barking of dogs, but also thunderclaps do not awaken them.

All daughters of song.

That is, both ears. A Hebrew expression, like a son of help, a child of light, a child of darkness, of which above (Cap. 10, 17) was said above. Thus the ears are called "the daughters of song," that is, those who have to do with song, or who hear song. These daughters of song bend down, "they wither," that is, they become heavy with old people, and the ears become deaf, are not delighted by the hearing of music.

V. 5: That even the high ones fear and shrink from the way.

That is, an old man walks with his shoulders and head bent. For the height of the body is the head and the shoulders. This height, I say, fears, that is, it is bowed. He wants to say: Old people walk like those who are afraid, wherever they go, because they walk with bowed head and bowed shoulders, which is also what those who are afraid tend to do.

When the almond tree blossoms.

That is, when the head turns gray. For the almond tree is full of white blossoms before other trees. Therefore, he takes this image of a graying old man from this blossoming almond tree.

And the locust is loaded.

That is, such an old man is similar to the locust. "The whole body is nothing but skin and bones." The bones protrude and the body is exhausted, and is nothing but a picture of death.

And all desire (capparis) passes away.

That is, when the pleasure ceases. For so I will rather use the Hebrew word [XXXXXX,

capparis, caper]. By this, however, he does not mean sexual pleasure, which ceases primarily with old people, but also all respectable pleasure, as if he wanted to say: An old man cannot enjoy any pleasurable thing, but is unfit for anything. The intercourse with him and his conversations are not sweet, but he is a living corpse. Therefore, you see that he is speaking here of the worn-out old age that is no longer fit for anything, not of the one that is still capable of doing something.

(For man departs, abiding forever [in domum aeternitatis suae], and the accusers walk about in the alley).

He inserts this passage, which forces us to understand this chapter on old age. He wants to say: Nothing remains but that man goes to his eternal house, that is, to the grave. For the grave is his eternal house or his world, because he goes there, from where he does not return. Meanwhile, we mourn him who is carried to the grave. "With weeping and wailing they carry him to the grave." Therefore, fear God before you come to old age, for then you will have nothing but to be carried to the grave with lamentations.

V. 6: Before the silver cord is taken away, and the golden fountain runs out.

That is, before food and drink cease, which is compared here to a silver rope and a round gold body or a golden wheel or ring. For as a wheel or a circle runs back again and again into the same circle and returns, so food and drink also run back again and again, and are in truth the silver rope, because only on these our life depends and is maintained by them.

And the bucket shall break at the spring, and the wheel shall break at the spring.

That is, before the breath and life cease. "The bucket" is our body, which is always in need of being repaired; "the wheel at the well" is the stomach and other members that serve to nourish the body.

V. 7 For the dust must return to the earth as it was.

Here Solomon looks at the passage Gen. 2, 7, as if he wanted to say: After death, dust returns to the earth as it was before. We have all been dust, therefore in death we become dust again as we were before.

But the spirit comes back to God who gave it.

Here, too, he looks at the passage Gen. 2, 7: "God breathed into man's nostrils the living breath." He does not indicate where the spirit goes, but says that it comes back to GOD from whence it came. For as we do not know from whence (andē) GOD made the spirit, so we do not know whither it returns.

L. 8. It is all vain, said the preacher, all vain.

He concludes the book with the same statement with which he had begun it, and adds a praise of his teaching and an admonition that we should not be distracted by strange and various teachings, but stick to what is prescribed. For this is a great pity, that where God has raised up His Word and good teachers, soon heretics and godless teachers arise, who by a kind of emulation turn the people away to themselves. This was also the concern of the apostles, that they would keep us in the right doctrine. For the right doctrine and the Word of God must also suffer this perversion. When God has awakened His word, heretics and apes are soon there, imitating the word. Moses ordered the worship and certain ceremonies; soon his apes followed and set up idols. So it is with the arts: if a man is a good poet, he must suffer his bitter reprovers (zoilos); if he is a good craftsman, these drones follow him. Thus all good arts have their imitators, that is, corrupters. But this is the very worst, that

the crowd follows those fools and takes them for true masters, 2) as Christ says of them [Matth. 24, 11]: "They will deceive many. This is what Solomon is complaining about here.

V. 9. This same preacher was not only wise, but he also taught the people good doctrine, and discerned, and searched, and set forth many sayings.

That is, the preacher could not get any further than being wise and teaching right; but he did not succeed, people did not follow him. He was an industrious man, he researched how to arrange every detail correctly, he taught diligently, he arranged many things in an excellent and glorious way; but where are the people who hear and receive it? Apart from words, nothing else follows. For either there is a lack of listeners, or godless teachers and peddlers are successful.

V. 10 He sought to find pleasant words, and wrote rightly the words of truth.

That is, he endeavored to benefit with proper and wholesome words, or, as Paul says [1 Thess. 2:13], with words that are worthy of all reverence, and he wrote out the words of truth correctly. He has not shrouded his teaching in darkness, as those imitators are wont to do who, because they do not understand rightly, do not teach rightly. For this is the sign that someone understands a thing, if he can teach of it rightly, says Aristotle. And when Demosthenes was asked how someone would speak well or rightly, he answered: if he said nothing that he did not know well. For he who understands something well can also speak well of it. But it is a praise of the author, as if he wanted to say: He has taught well and clearly, so that someone can recognize from his book what he should think, do, or not do.

These words of the wise are spears and nails, written by the masters of the assemblies, and given by One Shepherd. Beware, my son, of others more; for much bookmaking is no end, and much preaching wearies the body.

2) Wittenberger and Jenaer: vsrogarti liess; Erlanger: vsris artiŪeidns.

1) Thus the Wittenbergers: saus. Jenaer and Erlanger: 8UN.

Here he exhorts us not to be turned away by various and strange teachings, as if he wanted to say: You have an excellent master and teacher, beware of new teachers. For the words of this teacher are thorns or spikes, that is, they stick, "they are stapled". Such are also the words of David and the prophets. "The words of Humpel are like the foam on the water." And from this passage I draw the supposition (conjicio) that in this people some people were appointed, whose office it was to survey the books, and to collect the true histories into the yearbooks of the Hebrews; and the remaining books they were to put in order, so that they thus gave prestige to the books, and approved them as such, which were worth reading.

So there were many authors (autores) who wrote [holy] books (Biblia). But from all of them only those books are accepted and approved, which we call today the Bible (Biblia). Therefore he says: See then, my son, that you adhere to these books which are accepted, but despise the rest, because they were also despised by these wise men. For it happens that when one good book is published, ten other bad ones are also published, as it also happens to us. But the words of the wise are true and firm, "to which one may and should adhere". For they are firmly hammered nails; they have their standing from the men of the congregation. Other books are not like this.

And given by One Shepherd.

That is, a king, who is the shepherd, has ordered the wise men to acknowledge and approve the books. These, I say, have acknowledged the Holy Spirit in this book and have recommended it to the people. In the same way, the Gospels were accepted and approved by the fathers, that is, the fathers approved the Holy Spirit in them. But from this it is not necessary to conclude that the Church is, or that the Fathers are, above the Gospel, any more than it follows: I recognize the true and living God and His word, therefore I am above God and His word, just as he who acknowledges the prince is not above the prince.

not recognizes, also he not over the parents, who recognizes the parents. 1) So also here. These men do not teach this Shepherd, but they receive from One Shepherd. So also I make a distinction among the books and say: This epistle is apostolic, this one is not apostolic. But this is nothing else than that I bear witness to the truth. Now follows the exhortation:

Beware, my son, of others more.

That is, follow the books approved by those who have the Holy Spirit and have recognized them as those given by the One Master and Shepherd.

For much bookmaking is no end.

Here he shows the unfortunate tendency of human nature that all imitate these men and the best writers, but they do it very clumsily and to great harm. He now wants to say: You have to create in the world, where you will find countless books, with which they try to benefit the people; but you stay with the certain number "and keep to the Scriptures", as said above.

And much preaching wears out the body. 2)

He does not say this of the plague which the writer has for his person, but of that which the disciples or the hearers have, as if he wanted to say: They do nothing else with their many writings and books, but that they plague the people, whom they wanted to advise, namely [2 Tim. 3, 7.]: "They learn forever, and can never come to the knowledge of the truth." This, I say, is the fruit of these books, that they confound consciences and trouble people. Therefore, one must stand firm and remain with the teaching of the One Teacher. One must adhere to one, or to a few, who have the right form of doctrine; beware of the rest, who only deal with it by being regarded as having brought up something new, and are thought to be more learned than others, as now.

1) The passage from the parents is missing in the Erlangst edition.

2> The text of the Vulgate, to which the interpretation refers, reads: raeaitatio earnis utklotio.

the Sacramentarians and the like. Jacobus therefore rightly says [Cap. 3, 1.]: "Do not let any man forbear to be a teacher."

V. 13. Let us hear the main summa of all teaching: Fear God and keep His commandments.

That is: Summa Summarum is this: Fear God and serve Him, and have Him before your eyes, then you will keep everything that I have presented in this book. For if anyone does not fear God, he will not be able to keep any of these things. He has given examples of such people who live wisely and in a good way, but because they live without the fear of God, when misfortune comes, they are not accustomed to it and grieve; but those who fear God can even despise all evils and adversities when they come, and thank God when they do not come.

For this belongs to all people.

That is, what concerns all people and is useful to all. In every other way of life, profit is sought; in this, godliness. Paul expresses the same in this way [Titus 3:8, 9]: "These things are useful to men, but abstain from idle gossip."

V. 14. For God will bring all works into judgment that is hidden, whether good or evil.

That means: Everything will finally come before the court, may it be good or evil. The useless talkers, the blasphemers, the fools will finally be disgraced, and their teachings will not stand. Thus is that Zoi-

lus [who disparaged Homer] was finally thrown down alive from a rock, but Homer has remained the prince of poets to this day, even against the will of all people who are equal to Zoilus or even more unworthy than he. In the same way, all other good writers, especially in sacred doctrine, have remained to this day by God's counsel or by God's power. 2)

That is hidden.

This is hypocrisy. For these monkeys give themselves a good appearance, both in life and in doctrine. So also the 26th Psalm, v. 4. says: "I do not sit with vain people" (*absconditis*), that is, with those whom Christ calls Matth. 23, 28.] hypocrites, but Paul [2 Tim. 3, 5.], "who have the appearance of a godly being." Therefore God will judge every work, so that what is righteous (*genuinum*) remains, after all false appearance is taken away, with which those have hidden their work. He does not speak of the last judgment, but according to the branch of the Scriptures and in general of any judgments, whether of those by which the heretics are judged and overthrown, or of any ungodly. Everything has its judgment and its time, which God has set, and they must suffer it. This is how the pope is being tried today, and he is almost judged. Likewise, Arius and all other heretics have been brought to trial, and the Lord has exposed their shame (*pudenda*), as Peter says [1 Pet 2:12]: at the time when it will come to light.

1) We have taken here *insolssco* in this meaning, because the ordinary meaning of the word: "they rise", does not want to fit here.

2) Jonas rendered this sentence in his translation as follows: "So now and so many hopelessly foolish books of Cochläi, Eckii, Fabri, Emsers are forgotten by enemies and friends, the Lutheran doctrine has remained".

VIII Brief Interpretation of the Song of Songs.*)

Explained in lectures probably as early as 1526, in print dated 1538.

Newly translated from Latin.

Preface by D. Martin Luther on the Song of Songs.

About this song of King Solomon, many commentators have given various, inappropriate and strange explanations. But in order to get the most simple and correct meaning of this book, I consider it to be a song in which Solomon praises God and thanks Him that his kingdom and reign are ordered and confirmed by God, and prays for the preservation and expansion of this kingdom of his, and at the same time comforts the inhabitants and citizens of this kingdom that they should be of good courage in trials and adversities and trust in God, who always protects and saves his own who cry out to him 2c. Just as Moses wrote his song in Exodus 15:1 ff. about the glorious work of God that took place in the Red Sea at that time, and all the songs that are found in the Holy Scriptures, so did Moses write his song about the glorious work of God that took place in the Red Sea at that time, and all the songs that are found in the Holy Scriptures.

The same is true of the songs of Deborah (Judges 5:2 ff.) and Hannah (1 Sam. 2:1 ff.) and most of the others, as well as of the majority of the Psalms, with the exception of those that contain prophecies about Christ. Solomon undoubtedly wrote this song about his kingdom and his reign, which he administered through the goodness of God in the most beautiful and pleasant peace and tranquility, as will be evident from the text itself.

Furthermore, since any kingdom, principality, or regiment that has the Word and the right worship of God must suffer much adversity, that is, be a laughingstock and an abomination to the whole world, be in the midst of enemies, and expect death every hour like a sheep destined for the slaughter, such a kingdom, principality, or regiment is justly called a kingdom.

*At the repeated request of D. Johann Briesmanu (Brismann), preacher in Königsberg, Veit Dietrich published in 1538 the short notes which he had made for his own use at the time of Luther's lectures on this book. We believe, as does Köstlin (M. Luther, Vol. II, p. 156), that these lectures should be placed in the year 1526, because Luther states in his introduction that the Song of Songs actually belongs together with Salomonis; therefore, Luther will have moved on to the latter book immediately after completing his lectures on it. In a letter that Veit Dietrich wrote to Briesmann on August 1, 1538, he apologizes for the slow fulfillment of the promise to publish the Song of Songs, which he had already made to him several years ago, and sends him a copy together with the letter. This letter is dated from Nuremberg, and we see from it that Luther did not know about the publication. Köstlin remarks: "Only the circumstance that we know of no other Old Testament lecture by Luther for the years 1530 and 31 could be cited for the fact that it was to be published here. Also the sooxns chosen in this interpretation, which is completely different from Luther's later conception - for here God is the bridegroom, his people Israel the bride, while later he places Christ as the bridegroom, the church as the bride - points to a significantly earlier time; likewise the translation of the biblical text, which, deviating from our Bible, often closely follows the Vulgate. The first single edition appeared (as Walch and the Erlangen edition cite it) without indication of place and printer under this title: In eantioa outieorin brovis, sock oärnoänrn äilneiaä enarrutio v. Hlartui Imtüsri. 1538 in octavo. Under the same title, an edition was published in 1539 at Wittenberg by Johannes Luft, about which Walch notes: "In Herm. von der Hardt antosmpdu I, ntBoi-i, tom. I, p. 378 and Joh. Christoph Olearius, Verzeichniß der antoAraxUn Imtdsri, x. 41, a Wittenberg edition of 1539 is cited" which is the one used here. Whether it is the reprint of 1538 or a new edition, I cannot say, since one did not have that at hand. In the meantime, so much is certain, that this interpretation came to light for the first time in 1538." In addition, our writing was published in 1543 at Bafel together with Luther's Commentary on the Prophet Micah. In the collective editions this writing is found in Latin in the Wittenberg (1552), tom. IV, toi. 49; in the Jena (1570), tom. IV, toi. 268 and in the Erlangen, oxoZstiou oxsra, tom. XXI, p. 267. German according to Greiff's translation in the Leipzig edition, vol. VII, p. 1 and in Walch. In the previous volume, we got to know Greifs as a translator in the oporotions in psLmos, and therefore give a new translation according to the Erlangen edition, which has reprinted the Lufts edition of 1539, comparing the Wittenberg and Jena editions.

~~581~~ This song can rightfully make Solomon's regiment an example, as well as praise God in the same way, boast in God, rejoice, and admire and praise His divine mercy and power with which He protects His own against the devil's temptations and the tyranny of the world. For just as we use the Psalms of David and the writings of the prophets as examples, even though we are not David nor the prophets; but since we have the same and common goods with them, that is, the same word, the same spirit, the same faith, the same blessedness; since we endure the same dangers and tribulations for the sake of the word of God, so we also rightly claim their words and sayings for ourselves, praising and singing as they praised and sang: so may any regiment in which the church is, and any godly prince, use this Song of Solomon as if it were written with reference to his territory or to his regiment.

And in this way, this Song of Songs, which Solomon sang only of his regiment, becomes a kind of general song for all communities (*politits*) that are a people of God, that is, that have the Word of God and hold it in all honor and acknowledge it, and in truth believe that the power of the authorities is instituted and decreed by God, through which God preserves peace, justice and discipline, punishes the guilty, protects the innocent rc. For these great benefits they praise and glorify God with thanksgiving. Then godly authorities and regiments do not place any hope or trust in their treasures, power, wisdom and other human help, which is neither firm nor lasting, but comfort, admonish and encourage themselves to take refuge in God in all tribulations and dangers and trust in Him as the true and only helper and savior who never abandons His people who suffer persecution because of His name and word. For it is certain that the people who practice godliness and love the Word are subject to many evils with which they are afflicted by the devil and the world.

And therefore this song is called the Song of Songs, because it deals with the highest and greatest things, namely with the authority decreed by God, or with the people of God, not with any history concerning only individuals (*privata*), as other songs in the Holy Scriptures do, but with some whole and lasting kingdom or people, in which God continually performs many and tremendously great miracles and shows His power by preserving and protecting it against all attempts of the devil and the world. Moreover, he does not sing of these great things in ordinary words that are used by people in common life, but with magnificent and pictorial words he sets his things in the light and adorns them, so that the common people, when they hear them, understand that something quite different is being spoken of here. For this is what kings and princes are wont to do: they devise and sing love poems, which the common people receive as if they were sung about a bride or a friend, while through them they depict the condition of their regiment and their people, as the "Theuerdank" did, who adds the bride "Ehrenreich" to Maximilian; or when they speak of hunts, they want to indicate by this speech that the enemy has been destroyed and put to flight, and that they have achieved victory, as if they said: the boar is pierced, the wild beast is captured, and the like.

Solomon did it in the same way in this song of his. He uses splendid words and those that befit such a great king in describing his affairs: He makes God his bridegroom and the people his bride; and thus he sings how much God loves this people, how many and how great benefits he bestows upon them and showers them with them, yes, embraces and cherishes them with such kindness and friendliness as no bridegroom has ever embraced and cherished his bride. Therefore he begins and speaks in the person of the whole people as the bride of God: "He kisses me." 1)

1) This last sentence is inserted in the Wittenberg and Jena editions after the end of the first paragraph of the interpretation of the first chapter; here it is missing.

D. Martin Luther's short and very clear interpretation on the Song of Songs. *)

We have undertaken to interpret this book, not because we have the desire to show our erudition, as some do, who spend all their work on the dark books, because this may serve to make them famous as highly gifted people, since they have dared to tackle such things, which others shun because of their darkness, and in dark matters everyone is free to speculate and give free rein to his speculations or own thoughts: But that, after rejecting the unrighteous opinions with which this book has hitherto been obscured, we may indicate another, more suitable conception, which is useful for life and for the right contemplation of the benefits of God.

For we know that this is the purpose of all Scripture, that it serves "for teaching, for punishment, for correction, for chastening in righteousness, that a man of God may be perfect, fitted for every good work," as Paul says 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. Those who do not have this purpose in mind may, by their presumptions, cause inexperienced people to think that they are learned people, but they still do not recognize the true juice and power of the Scriptures. And this scholarship is not unlike the bodies that are afflicted with dropsy; they have indeed, puffed up by exceedingly strong tumors, the appearance of being rich in sap and power, but it is such a sap that is quite corrupt and bad. Therefore, in the interpretation, we direct our thoughts so that this book may also instruct us, both with such teaching that is useful for life and with all kinds of comfort.

For we will never agree with those who think that it is a love poem about Pharaoh's daughter, whom Solomon had loved; nor do I like that we interpret it from the connection of God and the synagogue, or, as those do who deal with secret interpretations (tropologistae), from the believing soul. For, dear, what kind of

What fruit can be obtained from these opinions? Although this book, since it is interpreted in so many ways by those who have written about it, still lies in darkness, we will not miss the main opinion by persisting in the new way, even if we may perhaps err here and there in individual pieces. My opinion is now this:

In the holy scriptures there are three books of Solomon. The first, Proverbs, deals mostly with the household, and gives general (communia) rules for this life and customs, not in the way the philosophers of the pagans did, but the more important doctrine of faith and the fear of God, of which the pagans knew nothing, is interspersed throughout. The second book, Ecclesiastes, concerns worldly government, and instructs not only everyone in general, but especially the authorities, namely, that he who presides over others must fear God, and do bravely what is in front of his hands, and should not let himself be weary in carrying out his office, neither by the difficulty of a matter, nor by the ingratitude of men. The third is this present picture, which has the title: the Song of Songs. This actually belongs to the preacher. For it is a hymn of praise to the temporal government, which in the days of Solomon was at its height in the most beautiful peace. For as in the holy scriptures those who composed the songs wrote them of the things which they had accomplished, so Solomon praises his temporal government by this poem, and begins, as it were, a song of praise for the peace and the present state of the commonwealth, in which he gives thanks to God for the exceedingly great benefits, the external peace, as an example to others, so that they too may learn in this way to give thanks to God, to recognize His very great benefits, and to pray, if something does not go right in the regiment, that it may be improved.

*) This superscription is missing in the Wittenberg and Jena editions.

The first chapter.

V. 1. the Song of Songs [Solomon].

Now the Song of Songs takes its name either from its subject matter, because it deals with the greatest of all human works, namely, worldly rule, or from its manner of speaking, because it is written in sublime terms. For it is through and through a poem rich in images; images, however, make speech sublime. 1)

V. 2. He kisses me. 2)

He speaks according to the customs of that people. In our country, kisses are not considered honorable. But kisses are a sign of love and favor. So he says then: God kisses (osculatur) me, that is, he is favorable to this community, he kisses it, and shows it all kinds of benefits and love.

But this is a word of faith that he says that God cares for the kingdom, which was afflicted in many ways according to its outward appearance, that it is loved and cherished by Him. According to the outward appearance, it does not appear that he kisses the synagogue, but rather that he mistreats and detests it. But that he adds:

With the kiss of his mouth, indicates that God honors this people of his word. And this, of course, is the treasure that is rightly praised as the first in the worldly regime, without which the worldly government cannot exist for a long time. This gift, which this people had, is also praised by Paul Rom. 3, 2.: "They are trusted that God has spoken." Likewise Ps. 147, 19. 20.: "He shows Jacob his word" 2c. "He does not do so to a Gentile." For it is the word that distinguishes the godly from the ungodly. It is also through the word that we come to know that all we have is

whether in the worldly government or in the household, are gifts of God, and only signs of the divine good will and favor towards us. Although all others have an abundance of all goods, they do not recognize that they are God's gifts. Therefore, it is impossible that they should not abuse them to their destruction.

Your love is sweeter than wine.

"Love" (ubera) refers to the doctrine by which hearts are nourished, that a man may be made perfect, fitted for every good work [2 Tim. 3:17]. He compares it to wine, to which the Scripture attributes this, that it gladdens the heart [Ps. 104, 15.]. So "wine" is put in a figurative speech for all the pleasures and delights of the world. This too is to be considered a word of faith, that he says: I prefer your word to all the pleasures of the world; for everything must be related to the word.

V. 3. Your name is an ointment poured out. 3)

These are very significant and apt images. "Your name", that is, your knowledge, is like an ointment, for it gives off a pleasant smell, and is spread further by the word. For this benefit of the word is not in one corner, but it is proclaimed through my whole territory, and spreads its odor also over the neighboring peoples, like an ointment poured out.

That one may smell your good ointment.

That means, where your word is, there one feels your benefits. For the godly know through the word that they enjoy God's gifts and have them in abundance. When these are taken away, they know that they are tempted by God and bear their cross with patience.

1) In the Wittenberg and Jena editions, this paragraph is added to the preceding introduction.

2) In Latin: oöeulatur mo; in the Vulgate: oseuletur.

3) Not accidentally by us, but in the Latin original this verb is placed before the following one.

That is why the maids love you.

This is a Hebrew way of speaking, that the cities are called mothers and daughters; but Jerusalem he calls "a maid" (virginem). Therefore the opinion is: By your word it happens that, moved by these so great benefits, the godly people who are here and there in my kingdom love you and cling to you with all their heart.

Until now he has praised his worldly regiment, especially because it has God's word. Therefore, the outward word is now despised by many in an ungodly way, who boast of the spirit without the oral word, through devilish revelations. And yet they do not know what is neither spirit nor word.

V. 4. Show me after you.

Knowing and being able are two different things. Therefore, when we have the word, we cannot immediately follow it, but our flesh, the world and the devil draw us away from the word. Therefore he adds a prayer: "You have given the word, for which I give you thanks; now see to it that we also do what the word teaches and follow it in our lives.

There is no state that does not have its difficulties. Take a wife, and you will soon see a great sea of troubles; you will find things that you dislike in your wife, in your children; even the care of your belly will torment you. So also those who are in the regiment feel a great many evils, for nowhere is the devil idle. Therefore, only prayer remains, through which we can overcome the difficulties and cliffs into which we fall. For God tempts us with these adversities for their sake, so that the glory of the Word may be brought to light and the divine power may be exalted in weakness; otherwise there would be no opportunity to display His glory and mercy.

This is how we run.

This is emphatic. He does not say, "We will walk," but, "We will run." If thou wilt lend me thy spirit, I will gladly execute the office of a prince, a teacher, a spouse, a disciple 2c.

If you do not bestow it, no one, no matter how much effort and care, will achieve anything, especially in the worldly regime. Thus we see that through the wisdom of the greatest people the most flourishing communities have been destroyed, not promoted.

The king leads me into his chamber.

He alludes to the use of bridegroom and bride, and announces under a picture that his prayer has been heard; for he indicates the supreme benevolence of God toward us. God, he says, comforts me in the adversities I experience in my regime; he shows himself willing and inclined, just as a bridegroom, when he leads his bride into the chamber, does not do so out of hatred for the bride. Thus he expresses the highest affection that God has for those who pray, that he may hear, comfort, be favorable, make his gifts and powers plentiful, so that each one may be able to carry out his ministry all the more fruitfully.

We rejoice and are glad for you.

The answer to the prayer is followed by thanksgiving. Now I will rejoice that you do not forsake me, but receive me in your great mercy.

There is a special emphasis in the fact that he says "over you", as if he wanted to say: Apart from your comfort and help, you feel nothing but hardships, troubles, impatience, sadness, affliction, etc."

We remember your love more than the wine.

This belongs to the thanksgiving; it means as much as: We want to be thankful, we want to remember that you remember us, how much you love us, since you give us your love (ubera,). For "the remembrance" denotes praise, commend, and give thanks. "Wine" he calls, as above [v. 2.], all fleshly and carnal pleasures.

The pious (rēctī -- the straight) love

The crooked (curvi), who are only concerned about their own advantage, want to live in such a way that they do not experience any hardships; but when some of these occur, they get angry and grumble with the greatest impatience. On the other hand,

When the pious (recti) experience difficulties and hardships, they bear them patiently and pray. Therefore, when they have been saved, they acknowledge the exceeding benevolence of God and His love for them, and so they love God all the more fervently. Therefore, Solomon now begins a sermon to instruct those crooked ones, so that they may also learn to overcome the present evils in the same way, namely, by suffering and praying. For this is what those do who have been challenged and have been heard, so that they also teach and instruct others, as the 116th Psalm testifies [v. 10]: "I believe, therefore I speak."

From the further Verlaus and the order of the whole book.

Furthermore, this is the order and the further course of this song, that it alternates with consolations, laments, prayers and also admonitions. For as it happens in a community that is ordered by laws, yes, as it takes shape in this life of ours, so he himself proceeds in this book, and presents us with a kind of outline of the community and of daily life, where the tribulation is followed by consolation, and the consolation by another tribulation, as night follows day. Thus in public affairs new storms, new movements and terrors are always occurring; when these are quieted, there is no rest for any length of time, but other disturbances and calamities immediately follow. Those who have to work in the worldly regiment can testify to this. Thus the apostasy of the people hit David in the beginning. No sooner was this evil removed, than another occurred, which was all the more serious the less it was expected. Absalom, his beloved son, took up arms against his father as an enemy, and was not satisfied with having driven his father out of power, but also defiled the king, his father's concubines and wives. Thus the government of a commonwealth is like a perilous navigation on a stormy sea. Therefore, Solomon often repeats the consolations and exhortations one after the other to encourage the hearts of the rulers, so that they, broken by so great difficulties, do not go back.

The heart must not kick or despair, but learn to rise up in this way through prayer and hope for salvation. When this has occurred, the heart must again be prepared so that it does not succumb to the following evils. For as the heights of the mountains are followed by valleys, and the night by day, so salvation comes in constant change after tribulation, and after salvation again another evil. If someone pays attention to this rule, he will understand a good part of this book. After that, if someone also feels like it, it does not take much effort to think up secret interpretations.

V. 5. I am black, but I am lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem.

I reminded before that after the thanksgiving he would start a sermon.

Daughters of Jerusalem.

That is, you commonwealths and cities that are around, do not fret about it if everything does not go well.

I am black.

Although I am such a worldly regiment, appointed by God and adorned with the word of God, I seem to be exceedingly miserable according to outward appearance. Nowhere do things go as I wish, very few are those who love and protect the public peace. I do not seem to be a commonwealth, but a sort of conglomerated heap of rebellious people. Do not be annoyed by this figure, do not focus your eyes on the fact that I am black, but on the kiss that God gives me, and then you will see that I am beautiful and lovable. For even though I am afflicted in many ways by heart, I am still lovely for the sake of the word and faith. The church, too, does not appear to be lovely in appearance, but is mangled and afflicted and exposed to the opprobrium of all. But this is our consolation, that our salvation is based on word and faith, not on outward appearance.

Like the tabernacles of Kedar, like the carpets of Solomon.

The huts "Kedar", that is, the Arabs, are bad and shapeless, whereas the carpets

Solomon's are royal and very beautiful. Therefore, I think that the sentence should be divided like this: I am black like the huts of Kedar. I seem to be like a multitude of Arabs who have no orderly regiment. For there are many among my people who do not believe the word, even many who are not obedient to the authorities. Therefore, it seems to be a disorderly bunch of people rather than a well-ordered secular regiment. But nevertheless I am lovely, like the carpets of Solomon. If someone looks at the inner form, he will still see many godly people in this community, who obey and are good and faithful members of the community 2c.

V. 6. Do not look at me because I am so black.

He continues with the exhortation against the aversions, and does the reminder: "Do not look at me in the part where I am shapeless, but fix your eyes on my form and beauty; consider my virtues, not my infirmities. Only he who understands this shall know that only then he has learned and understands the very greatest art. For this is innate in us, that we are more moved by a single fault than by all the virtues that are otherwise there. Thus today those who are considered the wisest in the world are annoyed by many evils, which they undeservedly blame on the gospel. Again, how great goods we have received through the benefits of the gospel, both in the hearts and consciences of men in particular, and publicly in the worldly government and in the household, no one pays much attention to, or at least very few do. For, my dear, what state was there before the revelation of the gospel, about which people could have rightly judged? Neither man nor woman nor children, neither the authorities nor the citizens, neither servants nor maids knew that they were in such a state that was pleasing to God. Therefore, they all took refuge in the works of the monks.

Likewise, what art was rightly taught before the light of the gospel went out? What custom of art was rightly displayed or recognized? This is clearly seen in

the subjects (disciplinis) in which the children were taught. Neither the proper use of grammar, nor of dialectic, nor of rhetoric was known; so much was lacking that they could have been taught properly. If this was the case in these minor arts, how much more did it happen in more important arts! With regard to theology, the thing itself speaks. Although the teachers of law (juris professores) understood their art and the custom of this art to some extent, yet, what was most harmful, very few believed that they were in such a state as to please God; the same may be said of the physicians. At that time, no one paid attention to such great damages; now, people have forgotten the present goods in great ingratitude and only look at the evils. But this supreme ingratitude deserves that we cannot enjoy the sight of such great goods, as it is written [John 12:40 ff]: The wicked shall not see the glory of God. The godly, however, see the great benefits of God and are grateful for them.

Furthermore, this rule must be observed very carefully even in private life. If someone puts blackness out of his eyes, he will see that the world is full of God's mercy, as it says in the 107th Psalm, v. 43: "Who is wise and keeps this? Then they will realize how many benefits the Lord shows." So you will see in your daily dealings with people that no man is so wicked that he does not also have many, yes, innumerable gifts. Therefore, the mind must be accustomed to admire the virtues of every man rather than to be offended by the infirmities that may be present. Every man has faults, but he also has his virtues, for he cannot misuse all the tools he has received by nature. But this way of looking at things will serve to bring peace to the heart. For if you will fix your eyes only on the afflictions and damages that occur daily, the heart must inevitably be challenged with impatience and hatred. Since these ills and these things cannot be changed, change thyself and take a different opinion.

and keep a free heart by not paying attention to the present damage. We are reminded of this by the very good saying that we have often used in Ecclesiastes: Let it go as it goes; it cannot be otherwise than it goes. But the present advantages and benefits are so many and so great that a godly man can easily forget the evils over them.

Because the sun burned me so.

The sun means tribulation, as Christ [Marc. 4, 6. 17.] indicates in the parable of the seed that is burned by the sun. Likewise in the 121st Psalm, v. 6: "Let not the sun sting thee by day, nor the moon by night." Therefore he says: "Now I pray that you will not be offended by any blackness; do not count it against me, the sun has blackened me"; as if he wanted to say: Wherever there is the Word and God's order, wherever there is any figure of the worldly regime, the sun will come and cause blackness. That is, the devil will oppose it, so that it seems that this word, this worldly regime will completely fall away. But do not get angry, the devil will not have the upper hand.

My mother's children are angry with me.

This is how it must be in the worldly regime, that not only are there many tribulations, but also that the children act senselessly against their mother, that is, against the worldly regime, against the commandment and word of God. Therefore, let him who is in the government know that he is set over rebellious citizens who lack only a suitable opportunity to stir up a riot. Since they are supposed to be helpful to the government, they deal with one another as they would like to overthrow and destroy it. This is what David and the Romans experienced, and I believe that this is the common complaint of all good princes today.

I was made the guardian of the vineyards, but I did not guard the vineyard I had.

This is a serious complaint. He confesses that he has the right, the power, the name of a

King have, but this also to exercise, he says, stands with others. "The vineyard is the people. Over this people I am set as king and regent. But what do I judge? "My vineyard I have not kept." Thus .he openly confesses that by human counsel the commonwealths cannot be maintained, but that all human wisdom is far too small to be sufficient to sustain so great a cause. The reason is obvious: however good, godly and wise princes may be, they cannot cure all infirmities. So great is the wickedness of the world, and even those who are in the vineyard resist, and resist, and will not be ruled. What shall we do then? Should we abandon the community because of such great difficulties and hardships? No. Rather, this darkness must be removed from the eyes as much as possible, and the mind must be occupied with the contemplation of the benefits of God, which he promises and also shows in his words; then, following the example of this king, one must also take recourse to prayer.

V. 7. Tell me, you whom my soul loves.

This is a prayer in which he confesses that he lacks wisdom and strength to govern the commonwealth well. Thus Duke Frederick of Saxony said to Staupitz that the longer he lived, the less he knew how to govern his duchy, since there was no one to whom he could safely entrust anything. Thus, after the civil war, Cicero spoke this word, which expresses the greatest displeasure and despair: "O wretched man, who in vain was thought wise! Therefore, godly princes should pray after the example of Solomon and say: O God, creator and governor of all things, whom my soul loves, show me how the vineyard, which you have commanded me to cultivate, must be cared for 2c.

Where you graze, where you rest in the midday.

Since his wisdom and powers have left him, he desires GOD as a comrade in government. Show me where

I wish that I could find you, so that you could rule the kingdom together with me. I am in the worldly regime, as it were, in night and black darkness, you are at rest in the middle of the day; I would like to be able to rule in the middle of the day, that is, in the highest peace!

So that I don't have to go back and forth with the herds of your companions. 1)

The covering was a sign of mourning, like the covering of the head among the Romans. Therefore he prays: Take me out of these troubles, by your covering lessen my sorrows, by your presence my reluctance and weariness. 2)

Give me courage that I may not despair or be subject to such great difficulties, and that in the hosts of thy fellows. I am in an excellent place in the army of your companions. There are still people who are governed by your word and 3) your spirit. For the sake of these, I pray, you will give prosperity and rest. Thus, in such great difficulties, he returns to prayer and words.

V. 8. Do you not know yourself, you most beautiful of women.

We have heard the complaint with which the authorities complain about the difficulty of governing the commonwealth, because the children also set themselves against the mother. Therefore, he now introduces the person of the bridegroom (fingit), who comforts those who feel such great difficulties and troubles, as if to say: You complain about your worldly rule, although there is no worldly rule on the whole earth that could be compared to yours; so rich is it in the highest gifts of GOD. You have the Word of God, the prophets, holy judges, holy kings. Do you not know this your beauty and your form? But this is how it goes: in the temptation we forget all the

We are only concerned about the present pain or our emotions. For the challenge devours everything so much that one sees, feels, thinks and expects nothing but evil. Even those who are well versed in the Scriptures, when they are challenged, need someone to give them comfort from the Scriptures. So it is necessary in temptation that we be reminded of "what is given to us [by God]," as Paul says in 1 Cor. 2:12. Now he also adds a counsel:

So go out on the footsteps of the sheep, and feed your goats by the shepherds' houses.

I can advise you nothing else than to go out and feed your sheep, but to set up your government and not to worry about having goats in your flock, that is, wicked, unjust, disobedient, rebellious citizens. Do not let the wicked hinder you, for the pasture is there for the sake of the sheep, and the secular government is instituted primarily for the sake of the good. But what is this that he adds: "to the footsteps of the sheep"? He does this, of course, so that he may look to the examples of his ancestors, who were sheep of God, to the holy judges, kings, prophets, 2c., so that, seeing that they, too, were challenged in many ways, he may suffer the present adversity with all the greater equanimity. Thus David consoles himself in the 77th Psalm, v. 12: "I remember thy former wonders." 4) Thus there is no comfort, no remedy against evil, but the word of God. For everything that is written, says Paul Romans 15:4, is written for our consolation, "that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope". That Christ was nailed to the cross, John [the Baptist's beheaded, Moses was close to death when his own already wanted to stone him 2c. [This comforts us, so that we can bear with greater equanimity the great ingratitude of the world, so that we can carry out our ministry with a simple heart and not let the goats hinder us.

1) In Latin: Ht^nîa ero sient opertns jnxta AreMs soâaliuni tnornni - What shall I be as one covered among the hosts of thy fellows?

2) Marginal gloss of the original: "What good is it that I thus go about, and eat myself up with sorrows that are in vain. HErr, hilf du 2c."

3) 6t is missing in the Jena.

4) Instead of: msmorubilinni in the editions, the Vulgate will read nûrubNinm.

V. 9. I liken you, my friend, to a traveling witness to Pharaoh's chariot.

Thereby he increases the given comfort. But as the time of war is different from the time of peace, so he also divides this amplified comfort into two parts. This first part must be related to the time of tribulation and the cross. In the tribulation you seem to be forsaken and overcome; but I have compared you to my traveling witness, that is, before my eyes you are like a victorious host prepared for battle, like the chariots of Pharaoh, the most powerful king. I believe that Pharaoh was mentioned because he was the most powerful king among all those known to the Jews.

It is a comfort of faith that is not felt, nor is it visible, for before his eyes Solomon's rule (politia) is like a worm. Why? Because, hindered and troubled by evils and the sensation of evils, it lets the word go and does not look at its gifts. But if one looks at the word, everything is quite true. It is therefore a very rich promise that God calls her His friend, but it is not in sight, but rather in appearance that she is abandoned by God.

V. 10. Your cheeks are lovely in the clasps, and your neck in the chains.

This is the other part of the increased comfort, which refers to the time of peace. For then the word of God is available to us, which one loses in temptation or retains with difficulty and hardship, then we are refreshed by the gifts of the spirit, which at the time of the cross completely disappear from the heart through the feeling of evil. We translate it "clasps" (inaures) for the sake that these ornaments are distinguished from each other and joined together in a beautiful order. The Hebrew word otherwise means cords (lineamenta) or rows. Furthermore, "clasps" and "chains" are the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the word. These adorn our neck, that is, the word is used publicly, it is taught, read, heard; everywhere one has the divine promises in abundance.

V. 11. We will make you golden clasps with silver bells.

Murenulas [necklace] is the same word which we translated before by inares ["clasps"]; but here it denotes the multiplication of the jewelry, as if to say: We will increase this jewelry to thee, and make thee also golden ornaments. The word will increase with you if you handle it. For the word is such a treasure that increases when you handle it and distribute it, but perishes when you leave it lying around. It must be in constant use. For the more it is taught, heard, learned, the more and more clearly it is understood. These ornaments should not be of gold alone, but also adorned with points of silver or made alternately, that is, the use of the word is multiple and occurs in many ways. He does this remembrance so that he may train himself in the word of God and in the examples given in the word; then he will see that he is a well-equipped traveler and that he will not be hindered by the goats that are in the herd. He that believeth seeth and knoweth these things: but he that believeth not, to him are such great comforts a play and a jest.

V. 12: When the king turned here. 1)

The consolation is followed by the fact that the person who is in the worldly regime (politica persona) believes the consolation, which is a special virtue of faith. For in general it happens that the heart, overcome by misfortune and present pain, cannot allow the word that promises something quite different from what one feels. But faith, no matter how distressed it may be, looks to the word and raises itself up through the word. Thus it is said in this passage: The king still sits at his table as if he wanted to say: In the affliction I felt that GOD had departed from me very far. Therefore I also demanded that he should show me where he was grazing. But he has not departed, he is present and

1) In Latin:
- The king is still sitting at the table.

rsx [st in aoeuditu suo

sits at the banquet, that is, he is favorable, he loves, he protects, he sustains. He is not concerned about how to destroy, deceive and torture me, as I was before in my temptation.

Gave my nard its smell.

My prayer came before him, since the access to him was easy and he was still sitting at the meal. That is why it pleased him, it delighted him, and it was answered.

V. 13: My friend is a clump of myrrh that hangs between my breasts.

Now he adds a price of consolation, and he expresses the consolation with lovely images. God is not far away, but is at work in our midst, and he is at my bosom, and I embrace him like a clump of myrrh, that is, he is favorable, he protects, he comforts 2c. In short, he is so disposed toward me as a bridegroom toward his bride. But it is to be noted that this is not so that one can grasp it with hands, but this comfort remains in the image that is taken from the smell. These things are only perceived with the smell, so that the mystery of faith is shown, namely that God is active (versatur) in His people through the smell, that is, through the word and His name. It must be a great faith that can believe this about God, that He is between the breasts, that is, very close to us and our most intimate friend, not angry 2c.

V. 14. My friend is like a bunch of grapes Copher, in the vineyards of Engeddi.

This is a price of comfort in images, that God loves, is favorable, protects 2c., as above. I believe that the grape Copher is a balm, for the reason that he adds: "in the vineyards of Engeddi". This is a city in the tribe of Judah at the dead sea, where balsam gardens are. Now I consider that the tree itself was called Copher from ancient times, but that the name of the balsam is more recent, which was attached to it by the preciousness, because the balsam far surpasses all other ointments.

V. 15. Behold, my friend, you are beautiful; beautiful you are.

After the challenge, when the consolation of the Word takes over the heart, we not only feel that God loves us and is favorable to us, but we also feel that we please God, that we are pleasing to God, that God cares for us. Thus the conscience and the spirit bear witness to each other. The conscience believes that it pleases God, therefore it praises God. The Holy Spirit approves of this faith and praises us in turn. This is what you see expressed here.

Your eyes are like pigeon eyes.

The dove has the praise of simplicity. Therefore, he praises the simplicity of faith that it does not take various counsels in the tribulation, as those do who are without the word, who do not have the eyes of a dove but the eyes of a whore, who turn sometimes to these, sometimes to those counsels, as we have seen in the enemies of the gospel in this whole time. Faith, however, clings to the promises of God with unwavering, simple-minded eyes, and has good hope of salvation even in the greatest dangers.

V. 16. Behold, my friend, you lift beautiful and lovely.

This is a fullness of comfort. The Holy Spirit bears witness in our hearts that we are certain that we are pleasing to God and beautiful. Therefore, it happens again that we also confess that God is beautiful, that is, pleases us 2c. But this beauty is not before our eyes in the time of tribulation.

V. 16. 17. Our bed is green. Our house beams are cedar, our slats are cypress.

It is all figuratively spoken, by which he indicates the joy that he has drawn from the consolation. In every worldly regime, it seems as if it will fall apart and perish in the face of some danger. Solomon indicates this attitude here, as if he wanted to say: Before, I thought it would come to pass that the whole kingdom would collapse. It did not seem to be a kingdom, not

I do not think of it as a worldly regiment, but as any old building that would collapse at any gust of wind. But now, having received the consolation, I see that my regiment is fortified, just like a house built of cedar, a material that does not spoil but lasts a very long time.

I also see that it is as adorned as a bed decorated with flowers. Just as there seems to be no end to temptation, so to those who believe in comfort, joy seems to be eternal, as Ps. 30:7 says: "I said when I was well: I will never again lie down."

The second chapter.

The first chapter contained a thanksgiving for the establishment of the kingdom and its glorious adornment; likewise, the consolation that the authorities should use in civil dangers and adversities, when they see that things do not turn out well anywhere and that sometimes the best counsels have very bad results. For he calls us to go out and look at the examples of the fathers, and not only to look at the evils by which we are oppressed, but also to consider our goods with which we are adorned by God 2c.

In this second chapter follows the description of another kind of affliction, namely, that this people, in addition to these evils which they had in their own country, also had to suffer the most bitter hatred of the world. For as he taught in the first chapter that we should be men who overcome the adversity that befalls us at home, so he teaches here how a godly authority must fortify itself against the hatred of the world.

V. 1. I am a flower in Saron, and a rose in the valley.
4)

This is the lament in which he indicates the perilousness, for he has the contrast in mind. The flowers that grow within the walls are safe from the attack of men and animals, but we, he says, are like a rose in the open field, to which access is open to anyone. I do not deny that I am a flower, I recognize the gift of the worldly regime that God has given me.

but God wanted this flower to have a fence. For who can enumerate all the dangers to which we are exposed in the midst of the heathen, dwelling as it were in an open field?

In this way, we can call the authorities "a flower of the field" because of the innumerable dangers to which they are exposed. "A lily of the valley" he calls a flower in a lower level, perhaps to make a distinction between the higher and the lower authorities. For that there are different kinds of flowers may also be referred to the diversity of gifts in a good commonwealth. This has the consolation of being a rose. Although it appears to the world to be without fence and guard, yet as long as it keeps the word of God and the service of God, it is surrounded and fenced with the fiery chariots which Elisha showed to his servant. So also Daniel indicates that the guardians of the commonwealths are the angels. But only the faithful see this guarding.

V. 3. As a rose among thorns, so is my friend among daughters.

Here is a change of person, which is very common in Hebrew. For the preceding is spoken in the person of the people, now the Lord speaks as if he wanted to say: You say rightly that you are a flower of the field. For before me you are a flower, though it seems as if you were an unguarded flower, but hear still more: you are in truth a flower among thorns. For I consider you to be a flower in such a way that I

1) Vulgate: üos eampi et Utium eonvaUium
- I am a flower of the field and a lily of the valley.

consider the other commonwealths, all other kingdoms, to be nothing but thorns grown and prepared to be thrown into the fire. If we understand this piece in this way, the consolation appropriately joins the lament. But this is a consolation only for faith. For if we follow the outward appearance, the kingdoms of the Gentiles, because they are at rest and flourishing, adorned with riches and glorious victories, seem not to be thorns but the most beautiful roses. On the other hand, it seems as if the commonwealth in which the church is located is considered as nothing in the eyes of God, like thorns, because it is afflicted in many ways. Therefore, according to this statement of God, one must firmly believe, even if the opposite is true, that the other nations are thorns, but this nation, as oppressed as it is before the world, is a rose.

Some interpret it in such a way that it is not a consolation, but a confirmation of the previous complaint. You are not only a flower of the field, but you are like a rose among thorns, which is pricked on all sides so that it does not rise. But I like better the conception that it is a consolation. "Daughters" he calls, according to a common way of speaking, the neighboring cities and peoples of the Gentiles.

V. 3. Like an apple tree among the wild trees, so is my friend.

This is spoken in the person of the people. For the whole book is, as it were, a conversation between God and His people, or between the conscience and the word. But the meaning is this: Just as you, God, consider me to be the only rose, so I, on the other hand, will accept, revere and fear no one as my God but you. For although I see many splendid trees, it is the apple tree alone that pleases me. But he names the apple tree primarily because this tree has the highest praise among the fruit-bearing trees.

Therefore this corresponds very well one to the other. The godly people are a rose before God. We offer Him flowers when we preach, pray, give thanks 2c. Whereas he is

for his people a fruit-bearing apple tree, from which they nourish themselves and have all benefits. The other gods, which are worshipped or invented by the people, are as it were unfruitful wood, which does not serve for food, but belongs to the fire. With GOtte, however, it is written that he creates benefit, nourishes, protects, governs, forgives sin and finally makes blessed.

Among the sons.

This explain simply: Among the nations or among that which is held up by men, as then the Hebrews take the word "sons" in a very broad sense.

I sit under the shade that I desire.

"The shadow" means the shielding, and therefore this image is exceedingly puffing, because the shielding of the godly does not seem to exist at all, while the thing itself shows that the same is quite certain and reliable, not only against the dangers of the world, but also against the gates of hell. But here he adds the reason why he does not want any tree more than the apple tree, namely because my God grants me both, he protects and he feeds me. The protection is quite certain and safe, therefore I like to sit under this tree. But the word "sit" denotes perseverance. Those who do not have this apple tree, like the pagans, wander here and there in uncertainty and are exposed to all the temptations of the devil.

And its fruit is sweet to my throat.

This is the other benefit that he praises in this apple tree, namely, that not only the commonwealth of the godly people is protected by his God, but that it also receives all other kinds of benefits from him. These are great when they are based on the benefits of the Word, in which the right nourishment consists, because the Scriptures not only offer the consolations of the promises, but also various examples and histories by which faith in God is nourished and strengthened. The wicked can expect nothing but dry leaves under their trees, but our consolations are such that it is not hard to suffer death.

In this way he consoles himself against the dangers, against the hatred and the anger of men with the favor of God and the praise of God's grace, which is the highest art in all temptations. Now, therefore, he will stroke out this sentiment that GOD is favored and gracious to him with many words, and in the matter there is no difficulty. The way of speaking is rather hard and requires an interpreter who can devote himself completely to the matter and has leisure to do so. I, however, am so drawn away by business and worries that I have almost no leisure left to gather my mind, and yet I have to prepare the way for others so that they can find more suitable things. 1)

V. 4. He leads me into the wine cellar.

It not only protects and nourishes me, but also fills me with joy. For "wine gladdens the heart of man" [Ps. 104:15]. But joy is the sensation of divine grace, to which the revelation of the Word brings us. Some refer this to divine blessing.

And his love is his banner over me.

The men of war are arranged in the camps according to the flags. Thus, he says, I recognize my banner under this god, which is love; to this I am ordered. If someone wants to make a distinction here, he can refer the preceding to the conscience and the peace of the heart, or to the spiritual good deeds. But this he can refer to the outward and worldly (politica) benefits that God shows to those who have His word and follow it. Thus Paul says [1 Tim. 4, 8.]: "Godliness has the promise of this life and the life to come." Similarly, in the 37th Psalm, v. 19, it says: "The pious will have enough in theuration."

But this requires gratitude that one also ascribes these bodily benefits to God, as Solomon does here. For even though other kingdoms have wealth and power, his people are better off if they firmly believe that they have this through God's goodness. So shall we also

Eyes, ears and everything else that we have, as extremely high gifts and very certain testimonies of God's benevolence towards us. For this reason, Solomon uses an image taken from warfare, and interprets these benefits in such a way that they are a banner or field sign to which God calls or gathers His people. Afterwards, however, we bear it with all the greater equanimity when these things are taken away from us again, because we believe that they were given to us by God and were only bestowed for use, not for eternal possession. Now he turns to the people.

V. 5. He adorns me with flowers and feeds me with apples. 2)

He has comforted himself with the benefits of God against the hatred of the world and has praised them; now he turns to the whole people and wishes that they would do likewise, that they would learn to recognize these benefits of God and give thanks for them. That is why he asks that others also bring him flowers or grapes and apples, and that he be sustained and refreshed.

But he looks at the annoyance that the world is used to admire the splendor and splendor, as if he wanted to say: You are annoyed by the fact that my kingdom seems to be far below the other kingdoms of the pagan kings, but, I beg you, see under whose shadow I sit, and it will become clear that our small being is stronger than the power and wealth of all the pagans. Therefore, do not admire those, but rather praise me, and recognize that what we have is God's gift. In this way you will also sustain and refresh me and others, who are also sometimes tormented by the anguish of weakness.

Some interpret "the flowers" of the servants (ministis) who recognize and adorn these gifts of God, as the patriarchs and prophets adorn with the highest praises this benefit that the kingdom is established among the Jews. But it seems to me that the preceding view is the simpler one.

2) Vulgate: k'uleite me iuridus, stipate me malis - Adorn me with flowers, refresh me with apples.

1) Erlanger: iuvrriana instead of: MveuiLut.

Because I am sick with love.

This simile is taken from the love of youth, to which the dominance is attributed before all other movements of the heart. This, he says, I ask for the sake of it, because I am completely inflamed with love for my God through the contemplation of his benefits. Therefore, I wish so much that this be recognized by all and that thanks be given for it.

V. 6: His left hand is under my head, and his right hand is hearting me.

This is also a simile taken from the love between a bridegroom and a bride, which is sacred and permitted. Therefore, the devil also hates it and seeks to prevent it, since it is the source of offspring and the upbringing of children.

But in this he understands the two most noble benefits that this people has: the kingdom or the secular government, which he calls the left, and the priesthood or the service of God, which he calls the right. This "heart," he says, causes this rose to endure the attacks of wild beasts and thorns, because it is completely in God's arms, whether you look at the church or the kingdom; for on both ropes is the word of God. Solomon would like to awaken this knowledge, yes, this faith in others as well.

V. 7. I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the deer or by the hinds of the field.

This is the voice of the bridegroom, with which he answers the bride to comfort her in this faith.

But before we explain the saying, we must answer this question: Why does he swear by creatures, since this seems to be forbidden in Matth. 5, 34. ff. since Christ forbids that one should neither swear by heaven nor by the head 2c.? But what the opinion of this passage is, we have elsewhere sufficiently shown.

Now it is enough that this same passage testifies that it was the custom of this people to swear by creatures. Thus in

the books of the kings this kind of oath is known: As the king lives [1 Sam. 17, 55.], likewise: As your soul lives [2 Sam. 11, 11.]; and Jacob swears [Gen. 31, 54. by the fear of his father. Thus we swear by our faith. First of all, the examples show that it is not forbidden to swear. Then the reason is strong enough that one swears rightly by creatures when we hold them up, as it were, as a sign of God. For this does not mean making an idol out of a creature.

Now let us explain the opinion of this passage. He calls the holy prophets, military leaders and kings in this nation deer and hinds, who were exposed to all border neighbors like deer in the field. I swear to you by your ancestors who were distinguished by faith and spirit. And this likeness fits very well. For he rightly describes the holy people in this nation by the image of the simple animals, which are exposed to everyone's violence.

That you do not awaken my friend, nor stir her, until she herself pleases.

He calls this a sleep, that the godly people enjoys these gifts, which is held by God and feels the favor of God. This sleep, he says, do not disturb it, but remain calm, so that it can enjoy this sensation for a long time.

V. 8. There is the voice of my friend.

This is a word of the bride, by which she indicates that she has heard the consolation of her bridegroom and the admonition to his own that they should be quiet and cause no disturbance. From this admonition, she says, I feel the certain fruit, and the word is not without effect. For those who would otherwise have caused disturbances are brought to obedience and quietness by the word.

V. 8, 9 Behold, he cometh, and leapeth upon the mountains, and leapeth upon the hills. My friend is like a deer, or a young stag.

That is, through the word he jumps from one city to another, so that everywhere you can see the

He feels the fruit of the ministry of the word (ministerii) among men. By the likeness of the young deer and the roe-deer, he signifies the course of the Word, which propagates its fruits very far and with great rapidity.

Behold, he stands behind our wall, and looks through the window, and peeps through the lattice.

Here again he indicates that he has all this through faith. For this is what the Holy Spirit does when he praises the gifts of God, so that we may know that he is not speaking of a carnal comfort, but of the joy of the conscience. "No one has ever seen God" [John 1:18], but faith is our covering [1 Corinthians 13:12 ff], so that we consider what is promised to be certain, and yet we do not see or feel it.

Therefore, what he said about the Bridegroom leaping from hill to hill like a young stag, and being present everywhere, ruling everything and having it in view, he now refers to the belief that he is indeed there, but still not seen; that he stands behind the wall, not seen with the eyes, not touched with the hands. Thus Christ is present with His Church through the Word and Sacraments, but He is not seen with eyes. And this comfort is necessary for those who have to work in the regiment. For since it is impossible to put an end to all evils, even if one wishes to do so, one must not think that God does not care for the governments (imperia). For He is present, but in such a way that He stands behind the wall and looks at us through the bars.

V. 10. My friend answers and speaks to me.

He softens here what he seemed to have said a little too harshly. "He stands behind the wall", he seems to have left his own at times, but he does not stand there mutely; he talks to me and comforts me, so that I can bear the adversity patiently, if such a thing happens from time to time.

Stand up, my friend.

These are very kind words with which the bridegroom answers his bride who is

suffers, but still perseveres in faith, so that she retains that certain confidence that she is God's friend, even when she seems to have been abandoned by God. Thus, the Jewish kingdom was shaken by many misfortunes, and yet the voice of the Bridegroom always testified to His special love for His people, even later in captivity.

My beautiful, and come here.

There is an emphasis on the pronoun: "My", as if he wanted to say: To me you are beautiful, though you are greatly despised before the world. But this beauty consists first of all in the word and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, secondly in the external government or the worldly regiment, which was ordered by God with very beautiful laws.

V.11. For behold, the winter is gone, the rain is gone and gone.

These are words of comfort by which he indicates a change of fortune. The time of spring is rightly compared with the calm in the church and in the secular regime, whereas heresies, riots, wars have and produce no less unpleasantness than winter.

Therefore, he consoles the Jewish people, so that they may become joyful again, since peace has been achieved for the church and the worldly regime, after the temptations from which they had suffered for a while have been overcome. Therefore, it will happen that everything will be green and renewed in the secular government and in the church, which until now had been disrupted and disfigured by tyrants and heretics. He calls his people to this hope and exhorts them to seize it. For this means "to rise" and come to the bridegroom.

V. 12. The flowers have come forth in the land 2c.

With what sprouts from the earth he compares the young people who are raised in peace to worship and to the studies of science and other honorable arts useful to the commonwealth.

The turtledove can be heard in our country.

He calls the godly people or the church a turtledove. For the turtledove sighs more than it sings. After the education of the youth, however, this is another advantage of peace, that religion is spread and people are given leisure to learn the word of God.

V. 13. The fig tree has gained nodes, the vines have gained eyes, and give their smell.

Right education and sound doctrine are followed by other benefits, namely that people are of good condition (*frugi*) and live holy. And this he indicates by the knots or unripe figs and the lovely smell of the blossoms of the vine. To this hope Solomon calls his people, who were placed in the kingdom ordained by God and the right worship of God.

V. 14. My dove.

The dove is always praised in the holy scriptures, firstly because of its simplicity and innocence, secondly because of its fruitfulness. And Christ's saying [Matth. 10, 16.] is well known: "Be without deceit like doves, and wise like serpents." Therefore, the dove is an image of the Church, which, although it must suffer injustice from all people, yet does not repay the injustice, but suffers it. Thus Paul exhorts the Corinthians [1 Cor. 5:8] to walk in integrity and truth, and to put away all malice of the human heart, which directs all that is divine and human only to its own advantage. But this is the simplicity of the deaf, to seek that which is God's and his neighbor's.

In the rock holes [, in the stone cracks].

Here we have to guess what Solomon wanted. Some interpret it in the opposite sense (*per anti-thesin*), that this simple and godly people does not live proudly like the world and the other kingdoms of the world, but that it lives like the little birds that are frightened and chased apart, which seek refuge in stone caves 2c. But I like it better that one takes the stone cracks for the temple in Jerusalem and

the whole service, because the church, according to the word of God, should perform its services in Jerusalem, within the walls of the temple, like dwelling in holes in the rock, not following the groves and valleys *rc.*, like the other godless bunch of idolaters, so that he emphatically says "holes in the rock", because there is no danger of idolatry, but certain hearing and certain protection 2c.

Show me your form, let me hear your voice *rc.*

Since you persevere in pure doctrine and holy worship, practice it in the place I have commanded; sing and teach, praise and thanksgiving. For I like your form and your voice. For all the works of the faithful are acceptable and pleasing to God. These are words of comfort.

But now a fox will soon be procured who will cause new troubles. For this is what the devil is wont to do, although he is completely defiled, he does not lie down in the ashes or in foul places to have his seat there, but chooses the purest places; he wants to be among the children of God, as Job I, 6. is written. That is why he stirs up false brethren in the church and rebellious citizens in the secular government. Therefore it is necessary that we walk carefully, as Solomon reminds us here.

V. 15. Faheth us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vineyards.

Above we said that the vineyard is the people of God, as also shown in Is. 5, 1. f.. Therefore it is easy to understand which are the foxes he commands to catch. And therefore he says of two kinds of foxes, the foxes and the little foxes, to indicate that on both sides there is danger from cunning and wicked men in the state and in the church.

The small foxes are the false brethren in the church and the heresies, which at first creep in such a way that it is difficult to notice them. But those who disturb the communities soon reveal themselves through seditious attacks, just like the big foxes, who also cannot hide themselves.

Dem my vineyards have won eyes.
Behold the devil's guile, he chooses the time when he can do the most harm. Thus, under the papacy everything was calm, but after the word began to be sown, turmoil and heresies arose, which were to spoil the budding fruit of the gospel, whereas before both the commonwealths and the churches seemed to enjoy a deep peace. Therefore, the more certain the fruit of the Word becomes, the more we must be careful not to leave room for Satan's deceitfulness.

V. 16. My friend is mine, and I am his.
This is, as it were, a summa by which the bride answers the bridegroom and vows that she will do this, namely, that she will persevere in simplicity and take care of the foxes and catch them.

V. 16.17. He who grazes among the roses until the day is cool 2c.
I will stay with my bridegroom, grazing among the roses, though night and shadow come.

Turn back, become like a roe deer, my friend, or like a young stag on the Scheideberge.

This is a prayer: Stay also with your people and be like a deer running in the mountains, that you visit, care for and govern the individual churches and communities. The Hebrew word that the translator has retained [in the Vulgate], "on the mountains Bether," must be a generic name (appellativum), not a proper name, for it means: on the divorced or divided mountains.

The third chapter.

V. 1. in my bed.
So far we have heard how Solomon generally sang about his worldly regime, in which he had the service of God, which was ordered by God Himself, now he gradually begins to depart from it, in order to come to his time and his person. Therefore, we must take almost everything that follows as referring to Solomon.

The bed he calls the kingdom, the authorities and the people, in which the bridegroom himself, GOD, lies and rests. This image is known from the prophet Isaiah. He says [Cap. 57, 7. 8.], Thou makest thy camp upon all the mountains, there thou hast rolled with thy woers 2c. For he speaks of the idolatry of the people, indicating that all that religion and worship was done on the mountains 2c.

I searched at night for the one my soul loved.
But the fact that he says he has searched indicates the trouble that often occurs in the worldly regime. For before Solomon

the kingdom of Israel has been troubled by very many storms, as is known from the history of the kings. In favor of this is also the circumstance of the time, that "at night", that is, at the time of the calamity itself, he had sought that which he loved, desiring a calm and constant kingdom; for it ["which my soul loves"] is in the neuter.

V. 2. I will rise, and walk about in the city 2c.
This also belongs to the description of the attitude according to which a good king and all the people wish that there may be peace and that the evil in the secular regime and in the church may come to an end.

V. 3. the watchmen who were going about the city found me 2c.
The watchmen are the judges and the rulers. Among these, he says, I sought what I love, peace and quiet, but neither among Saul and David, nor before them, among the judges, did I find it. As often as a

When a new judge or king arose, there was hope that the damage of the worldly regiment would be remedied, but I did not find this until I got a little further and came to Solomon. There I finally found what I was looking for, as his name also promises.

V. 4. I had him.

I take all this as having been said of the person of Solomon, under whose reign the kingdom was in the highest bloom in peace and every kind of blessing. And this is not to be taken here as if he wrote this for his own praise. For everything is said in the person of the secular regime, which acknowledges God's benefits bestowed by the godly authorities and thanks God for them. In this way, this praise of Solomon, which is inserted in this chapter, must be taken.

I will not let him go until I bring him to my mother's house.

The house, the lair, the throne, the palace and similar things mean the people or the kingdom itself, as if to say: My people are like a bed deprived of a spouse. For how much and great adversity has it endured in turmoil, wars, enmities 2c.? But after God has given Solomon to his people as king, peace and tranquility have been achieved, so that he can safely lie and rest in his mother's bed.

V. 5. I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the deer 2c.

Thus, as we have also shown above [Cap. 2, 7.], he names the holy prophets in this people, yes, he also includes Christ Himself as the head of all the saints.

V. 6. Who is she that cometh up out of the wilderness like a straight smoke?

This passage was sung about the holy virgin, so that there would be no lack of traces that could prove the incredible ignorance and blindness of our adversaries. Here, it is not about the holy virgin at all; the Jewish

The kingdom as it was under Solomon is described and praised with dainty and poetic images, so that the opinion is: The regiment and kingdom under Solomon was full of the sweetest dust, so that it filled all neighboring kingdoms with the sweetness of its smell or with its glorious smell. It is therefore rightly compared to the smoke that rises from lighted spices and fills the whole palace. Thus by the sweetness of this exceedingly pleasant odor the queen of the south was induced to come to Solomon 2c. [1 Kings 10:1.]

The fact that he mentions different kinds of spices and says that smoke rises from them refers to the fact that there were many gifts in this people, wisdom, prudence, patience, faith 2c.

V. 7 Behold, around Solomon's bed stand sixty strong men.

Here you see that what was previously God's bed is called Solomon's bed. But we have said that "the bed" is the people; of this he says that it is protected by sixty strong men. By these is quite correctly understood either the people of war, or those who in peace administered the commonwealth as Solomon's counselors. For it is not possible that one man, even if he has the highest wisdom, could manage all the affairs.

One, therefore, lies in bed, who is the head of the kingdom. With him sixty keep watch, who hold the sword in their hands and know how to fight, that is, who are called to administer the commonwealth, and also have the necessary wisdom to carry out the things. For both are necessary, that they be skillful (apti) and called. That he adds:

V. 8. Every man has his sword on his hip,

Means the diligence and care that secular government requires. For one must be attentive to all events, never be careless, never be sure, as Paul says Rom. 12:8: "If anyone governs, let him be careful."

V. 9. King Solomon had a litter made for him.
The part of the price we have heard so far is nothing else than a thanksgiving for the bed, that is, for the people. Here he commemorates the palanquin or chair that Solomon had made for himself. We must not think, however, that this is said of your material (materia ---- material), but he compares with the chair or the sedan chair the laws and judgments with which Solomon provided his people. He praises them because they were splendidly adorned with gold, that is, with wisdom; with silver, that is, with eloquence; with purple, that is, with ardent love; with cedar of Lebanon, that is, with incorruptibility, so that they were firm and immovable. But why this?

V. 10. For the sake of the daughters in Jerusalem.
Not because of the Gentiles, but for the sake of God's people.

V. 11. Go out and look, you daughters of Zion, at King Solomon.
This is also a piece that fits very well with this praise, as if he wanted to say: I have shown you what kind of kingdom God has given you under Solomon, and with how great gifts you are showered, so that you have laws and judgments at home in the commonwealth, and peace outwardly. Now do this also: Look at the beginning of these gifts. Solomon did not seize the kingdom by force, but his mother crowned him, that is, the kingdom was given to him with the consent of the whole people. Therefore, look at him and hold him in high esteem, and give thanks to God for these gifts of his that he has so richly bestowed upon you in this king 2c. And this little piece shows sufficiently that this figurative speech, which he uses everywhere, has no other opinion than that Solomon wanted to decorate his commonwealth and give thanks for it.

The fourth chapter.

V. 1. Behold, my friend, you are beautiful.
In the third chapter, we heard the voice of the bride praising and thanking God for the kingdom ordered by Solomon. In this chapter, the bridegroom answers, because they are alternate songs.
Furthermore, this alternation, that the people and God sing alternately, serves to fortify the faith, as it were, by a pledge of the Spirit, and to make it certain that these things please God and that it is in grace. Therefore, since the people previously praised God's gifts in this realm, they now hear God Himself do the same, so that they may be more inflamed with thanksgiving and learn to recognize and view His gifts more clearly. Therefore he says: "How beautiful you are, O kingdom of Israel, how holy you are, because you certainly think that you please your God. He begins the description of beauty from the head.

Your eyes are like tasbe eyes.
"The eyes" signify the guides and teachers; thus it is said Luc. 11:34, "The eye is the light of the body." These he calls "deaf eyes," that is, excellent because of their simplicity. For this is required above all things of a teacher, that he remain in simplicity of doctrine and worship.
Therefore, the first thing that God praises in this people is that they have the priesthood and the right worship. These are the eyes that deserve the first prize. Thus Daniel also praises [Cap. 7, 4.] his lion, that is, the Babylonian kingdom, that it stood on its feet like a man, with its head erect, and had a human heart. For this is due to the fact that this monarchy was endowed with the knowledge of God, as the king's command [Dan. 6, 26. f.] testifies.
But here we must note that this bride has dove's eyes before the bridegroom.

For in the sight of the world it is judged that there is nothing more ugly or unshapely; for the wisdom of the flesh cannot judge this form. Although it sees and hears it, it sees it as through a colored glass.

Between your braids.

I translate [instead of: *Absque eo, quod intrinsecus latet in the Vulgate*] thus: "Your eyes are like dove's eyes, between your locks of hair", so that it indicates that the hair of the head hangs down to the eyes, because that is also a magnificent adornment for a girl. Furthermore, the locks of hair signify the adornment of the priesthood, as it is necessary in the church that everything be done in order and in a proper manner. Thus it is also said in Isaiah [Cap. 7, 20.]: The Lord will take off the hair and the beard by the Assyrian, and elsewhere [Amos 8, 10.] he compares the people deprived of the priesthood to a bald head. Some prefer to understand by the locks of hair the remaining leaders (*duces*) of the people.

The hair is like the herds of goats that are shorn on Mount Gilead.

Perhaps he alludes to the passage Gen. 31, 23. ff. that Jacob stayed overnight with his armies on Gilead when he returned from Mesopotamia, although it seems more appropriate to me that he has the name of the mountain in mind. But this one means a heap of testimony [Gen. 31, 48.]. With this name he alludes to the temple where the sacrifices and the other services were held.

He does not compare the hair to goats per se, but to a herd of goats to indicate the unity and unanimity of those who teach among the people. That is why he calls them shorn goats, not because they are shorn, but because the hair is the same as if it were combed.

V. 2. Your teeth are like the flock with trimmed wool that come out of the flood.

As you know, whiteness is praised in the teeth, blackness in the eyes. But as the sameness of the hairs indicates the conformity of the teachers to one another, so do they see

We also see that the teeth stand in a row and help each other, as it were. But the teeth are responsible for biting.

This is also required of a teacher, that he be powerful to punish and to convict. But this must be done in such a way that the teeth are still white, that is, it must be done without bitterness, without sharpness and spitefulness, so that correction is sought, not revenge. Such teachers, he says, this kingdom has.

They all bear twins, and none of them is barren.

This he adds to indicate the fruit of the preaching ministry. For then twins are born, when the hearts are first frightened by the law, and then raised up again by the promises or the gospel. In this way, those who rightly share the Word see the fruit of their teaching in the church. For it is not possible that the church should be taught without fruit, as he says, "There is none among them unfruitful."

V. 3. Your lips are like a rosy string.

Red lips look exceptionally good on a girl. Furthermore, the lips signify the office of teaching. They are double, as the kind of teaching is double, that of the Law and the Gospel. That they are red is a sign (*symbolum*) of love. For the noblest work of love is that one teach rightly of religion.

But they are compared to a cord or scarlet bandage on the head, with which the hair is tied together to indicate concord, as Paul reminds us [Rom. 12:16.], "Have one mind among yourselves" 2c.

Your speech is sweet.

The doctrine of the wicked is toil and labor, yes, an open grave, as the prophet [Ps. 10:7, 5, 10] calls it. But this is the price of the word of God, that it is sweet, for it restores the sorrowful and brokenhearted. And Peter says, Joh. 6, 68.: "Lord, where shall we go? Thou hast words of eternal life."

Your cheeks are like the score on the pomegranate.

Red cheeks are also a magnificent adornment. They actually do nothing, but shine and are seen; they do not teach, like the eyes and teeth. Therefore I refer it to the walk or manners of the teachers in the church, for in them also the fire of love must shine, as Christ says [Matt. 5:16.], "Let your light shine before men."

V. 4. Your neck is built like David's tower with a breastplate.

This also goes on the teachers. For they must not only build, but also protect. In time of peace one must teach, but in time of war one must fight and resist the devil and the heretics.

Therefore, with this beautiful figure, he demands a firm and straight neck, which he compares to the tower of David. As far as I know, nothing is written about this tower in the holy scriptures, but without a doubt it was very strongly fortified and equipped to drive away the enemies. This is how a teacher must be equipped to be mighty in teaching, Titus 1:9.

On it hang a thousand shields.

This he adds to indicate the many weapons (*copiam*) with which the teachers must be armed against heretics of every kind and Satan's cunning and deceit. This was all the more necessary with this people because they were naturally inclined to idolatry, to which they were also provoked by the daily examples and customs of the neighboring pagans, even if they had been without false teachers and false prophets.

V. 5. Your two breasts are like two young doe twins.

Besides describing the ministry of the Word through the eyes, the teeth, the hair, the tower, he also applies the simile of the breasts to it, which fits very well to the consolations that are given to frightened hearts. Thus Paul says 2 Tim. 3, 16: "All Scripture, inspired by God, is useful for teaching, for punishment, for correction, for chastening in righteousness" 2c. For there he says without a picture what Solomon said

here, as it were, with poetic images.

But how do breasts and doe twins rhyme together? Perhaps he is alluding to the fact that they are not breasts like those of whores, but chaste and tender ones. Thus in Proverbs, Cap. 5:18 f., he calls the wife by this name: Rejoice with your wife as with a deer.

Which graze among the roses.

But they graze in woods! But this also belongs to the description, so that he indicates that the breasts are lovely and exceedingly tender, because they swell up, not by the little pasture of the grass, but of roses.

Here I do not want to say anything about the impure thoughts that occur to the youth when they hear such descriptions. For the Holy Spirit is chaste and remembers the female members in such a way that he wants them to be regarded as good creatures of God. And there is nothing in this book that pleases me more than to see that Solomon speaks in such lovely images of the highest gifts that God has bestowed upon His people.

Here, then, is presented to us an excellent example of gratitude. And God would have us praise God in such a way, learn to thank Him in such a way, that we would call Him our sun, our friend, and the Church His deer, which is grazed with flowers, etc.

V. 6. I will go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of incense.

This is as it were a summa, with which he concludes the price of the office of the word, which is appointed in this people. For up to now he has given almost all the functions of the word, which are compared with the eyes, the teeth, the hair etc..

Now he adds, as it were, this exclamation: "This gift of yours is for me like a mountain on which myrrh and frankincense grow, the most lovely fruit. There I will remain, there I will feast, until the day is cool and the shadows close in. I will not grow weary of these gifts; I will seek nothing new, as weary spirits are wont to do. For the more this teaching

The more it is eaten, drunk, seen and heard, the more the hearers must thirst and hunger for it, and wish that they would neither hear nor see anything else forever. Those who do not have this attitude have never had a proper taste for the word of God, no matter how much they know how to talk about it.

The myrrh is an emblem (symbolum) of the Word, but the frankincense of prayer.

V. 7. You are beautiful in all things, my friend, and there is no stain on you.

Here, I think, is another lesson, although it also belongs to the praise he has begun. For he speaks of the fruit and efficacy of the word, namely, what the ministry of the word, which is so highly praised, accomplishes in the people, as if he wanted to say: Before I looked at you only from one side, namely, according to the priesthood; now I see that you are quite beautiful and without spot. For the citizens carry the word, which is preached publicly, home, and learn to govern themselves and their own from the word, so that we experience everywhere, in the temple, in the secular government, in the household, the certain fruits of the word, which permeates like a leaven all parts of the community, all offices and classes.

For if we refer this beauty to the word, it rhymes very well. So also Christ says [John 15:3], "Ye are clean because of the word which I speak unto you." And even the church today, although it always asks for forgiveness of sins, is nevertheless, if one looks at the word, the sacraments, the faith, the head itself, Christ, completely pure and without stain.

V. 8. Come, my bride, from Lebanon, come from Lebanon. Come in, come from the height of Amana, from the height of Senir and Hermon, from the dwellings of the lions, from the mountains of the leopards.

The Lebanon is known. Also the mountain Amanus is known from the writings of the Latins; Senir is a part of it. They are almost contiguous mountains and all north of Jerusalem.

But this is a kind of admonition that

the people should keep the word and not be turned away to idolatry by the examples of the neighboring pagans, as if he wanted to say: My kingdom extends to Lebanon, but you, my citizens, beware of the heathen. The dwellings of lions and the mountains of leopards are near, that is, We have great kingdoms of the Gentiles in the neighborhood; but hear, you come hither to Jerusalem and to the temple where the word is. There is nothing there but monstrous beasts, from whom you must expect the utmost dangers if you do not flee.

V. 9. You have taken my heart, my sister, dear bride!

Here is a particularly great affection, by which we see how great a joy it is before God and the angels when people agree in words and have the same mind. For he calls such a people his friend, he calls her his bride, he calls her his sister, and says that his heart is as it were wounded with love.

With your eyes one.

There is an emphasis on the word "one" to indicate that God is exceedingly pleased with simplicity, unity, and purity in doctrine, as we see that Christ and the apostles everywhere exhort and urge this conformity.

V. 10. How beautiful are your breasts, my sister, dear bride!

The breasts are not only with the teachers, but also with the people. For Christ's saying is true [Matt. 18:20]: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Therefore, when one brother comforts another in particular (privately), when he proclaims to him the forgiveness of sins, the word is valid, and is not lacking. For the Holy Spirit is effective through the word everywhere, where it is only acted in the right way and sincerely, whether it is done publicly or in particular.

Your breasts are lovelier than wine.

Comforts of any kind are nothing when compared to the comforts that the Word of God holds out to us.

The smell of your balances surpasses all spice.

Your reputation is more fragrant than the good reputation of all the pagans, because it comes from the word. For what is the fame (fama) of the whole world compared to that which you have, since you do not only counsel things, as the jurists do, not only the body, as the physicians do, but you heal the soul, since you straighten the conscience and comfort it with the ointment of your bridegroom. This ointment of the Word heals body and soul, and restores and sustains both.

V. 11. Your lips are like dripping honey.

So far he has given thanks and praised the wonderful gift that God has ordered the secular government and the priesthood in this people; now he adds that this is not only ordered by God, but also receives prosperity from Him, and the effect and fruit of this order flows through the whole people. 2c.

"Honey glue." The people who have the ministry of the Word in such a way are the honeyseim, that is, the friendly conversations and mutual comfort. And "the dripping honey-seed," that is, that flows out. This sweetness and purity of the teaching goes through the whole people.

"Milk." With milk the weak are nourished; this is also the office of the Word, for GOD does not cast away the weak.

The smell of your clothes is like the smell of Lebanon.
4)

This nation is adorned with the most beautiful virtues that follow the Word. Therefore, it is a smell of incense, that is, therefore it is famous, and far and wide its good reputation is praised. But he says "odor of incense" because this rumor indicates something divine. For the most excellent praise of this people is its exceedingly beautiful order of worship.

V. 12. My sister, dear bride! you are a closed garden
2c.

This is another praise of this people. For he praises the same, that it is sealed with the most beautiful laws, and that it has received its form by circumcision and other customs, and, what is greatest, that it is sealed by the promises, by which it is distinguished from all other peoples. Thus we Christians are now sealed by the Word, Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar, by which we are distinguished from all other peoples, not only before the world, but actually according to the judgment of God.

V. 13. the plant is like a pleasure garden of pomegranates, with noble fruit (cum pomorum fructibus) 2c.

This nation is a garden whose growth (emissiones), that is, the plants that grow from the earth, are like a pleasure garden, full of trees, that is, holy people.

What the Latin translator has given: cum fructibus pomorum [with the fruits of the fruit trees], I take for lovely and delicious fruits. The various fruits and trees mean the various gifts and offices among the people: good teachers, good authorities, good fathers of the house, good servants and maids, good young and old people 2c.

V. 14. [With all kinds of trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with all the best spices].

"The tree of incense" are those who pray faithfully and constantly. Thus, "myrrh and aloes" mean those who kill their flesh. In such a way, all kinds of gifts flow from the word of God to the listeners.

V. 15. Like a garden fountain, like a spring of living waters.

This is a summa: you are in truth a fountain of waters flowing from Lebanon. "Lebanon" he calls in figurative speech the city Jerusalem, as if he wanted to say: Jerusalem, both in the priesthood and in the temporal regiment, is as adorned by GOD with many gifts as a fountain that waters other gardens. For by her example other cities are also provoked to accept religion and civil order.

1) Instead of: "Libanons", which is found in the Hebrew and in our Bible, the Vulgate offers tkuris [of incense¹]. The interpretation refers to the latter.

V. 16. Arise, north wind, and come, south wind; and woe through my garden, that its spices may drip.

He wants this garden to be practiced through trials, so that tribulations and good

Days alternate with each other. The south wind blows up through presumption, the north wind dries up through despair, not so that the garden may perish, but so that its fragrance may be spread further, so that the power of the word in the cross may be revealed.

The fifth chapter.

This is a prayer of the people who recognize the benefits and gifts of God. For it asks that the beloved may come into the garden that he has so adorned with praises, that is, that he may bless it and receive the present gifts, as is prayed in the Psalms [Ps. 68, 29. Vulg.]: "Strengthen, God, what you have worked in us"; otherwise the hearts become secure and fall away.

Cap. 4, 17. My friend comes into his garden 2c.

This garden, this worldly regiment, you, my God, have prepared; therefore, come, cultivate and maintain it with your word and spirit, so that it does not perish through lack of maintenance. Eat of its noblest fruits, that is, declare to us by your presence that all this pleases you 2c.

Cap. 5, 1. I come into my garden 2c.

The prayer is answered. For he indicates that he is present and approves of everything, and that everything pleases him. This is the testimony of conscience that the godly feel in their office and profession, that when they carry out their profession, they can certainly claim that God approves of their works and that they are pleasing to Him, even though they are sometimes somewhat negligent. For here the forgiveness of sins is not excluded.

I have broken off my myrrh along with my spices.

"The myrrh" is the killing of the flesh. "The spices," which are sweet-smelling, are the rest of the good works and fruits of faith; these, he says, he gathers and enjoys.

I have eaten my Seim together with my honey 2c.

Notice the emphasis that he says all those things are his, as if to say: I like thy preaching, thy comforts, thy works; in thy life, work, speaking, teaching 2c. thou pleasest me. But because in this weakness it is not possible that much should not be missed, either by negligence or otherwise, yet this obedience, however imperfect, is pleasing because of faith in Christ, as John says [1 John 3:20.], "GOD is greater than our heart." We have His good, which is infinite, against our finite evil.

Eat, my friends.

This is an appeal to the whole church that they should enjoy those benefits and gifts with gratitude. These are necessary consolations that are very difficult to believe for those who are in the secular regime or in the service of the church. But they strengthen the hearts of the godly, so that they do not leave their office broken by hardship and the ingratitude of men.

V. 2. I sleep, but my heart waketh.

Here begins a new lesson. For until now, he has described the time of the most beautiful peace that flourished under Solomon, and for which he gave thanks; now he looks out into future times, and sees that because of the sins of the people, both the secular regime and the priesthood must be afflicted with various ills.

For as change takes place in the weather, so after peace follows war, after sadness joy, after affliction comfort, after comfort again another affliction. Solomon treats these changes almost to the end of the book and describes the future temptations in a general description. This is how it will constantly be in this kingdom; we will be challenged again and again, we will be plagued with many misfortunes 2c.

I am asleep, but my heart is awake.

I sleep, I enjoy deep peace now, I am safe; everything is calm, nevertheless my heart is awake. For I see the sins of the people, I see that God threatens misfortune through the Word. Therefore, I am anxious about the future calamity 2c.

There is the voice of my friend knocking.

This is where the cross begins. The voice of the one who knocks is the voice of terror that wants to wake her [the bride] up so that she will not be safe and lose the present goods. For the cross is necessary and useful for us. "He that loveth his son chasteneth him," says Proverbs [Cap. 13, 24.f.

Open to me, dear friend 2c., for my head 2c.

This is an accusation against the bride: The peace you have enjoyed so far makes you sluggish. You lie in bed and leave me, who am drenched with night rain, at the door, that is, you neglect me, you administer both the secular regiment and the priesthood carelessly. The head and all the hair is wet, that is, the rulers in both kingdoms are neglected 2c.

V. 3. I have taken off my skirt.

I lie there naked, I cannot get up. This indicates not only the guilt of neglecting the word, but also rebelliousness. She does not want to obey God in patience, who afflicts her for her sins; she does not want to leave peace.

but nevertheless continues in their sins. But in the Psalm it says [Ps. 85, 11.] that justice and peace kiss each other, because without justice peace cannot even be hoped for.

V. 4. But my friend puts his hand through the hole.

Here he wants to force her to get up, however reluctantly she may do so. Thus he put his hand through the hole, since he sent the Assyrian to afflict her with other misfortunes; thus he woke up this worldly regiment, which had fallen into indolence and had become unrestrained by the long peace. God does not lie; His threats are always followed by their fulfillment.

V. 5 Then I got up to help my friend.

To open the door means to surrender the heart in patience. She therefore says that she patiently endured the hand of God. But lest anyone think that this was easy, she says: "My hands dripped with myrrh, and myrrh ran over my fingers on the latch of the lock." She wants to indicate that it was difficult to overcome the flesh, that she agreed with GÖt, that she did not grumble, but allowed the punishment and suffered.

V. 6. But he was gone and gone away.

Here the temptation is intensified and increased, because it seems as if God abandons us in the midst of misfortune, and no consolation is offered to the weary soul.

There my soul went out (*anima mea liquefacta est*).

The verbum means: she went out, as if he wanted to say: I am seized by such great longing that I almost faint. I feel no help; only his word he has left me, to which I cling, that I almost become powerless 2c.

V. 7. I was found by the guardians who were going about the city.

By "the keepers" here I mean the teaching of the law, which does not comfort, but only terrifies more, and moves up the sins, as those people in the book of Job condemn, because they

should comfort us. The guardians can also be taken for the teachers who teach us useless help in misfortune, on which we should rely. Thus, the service of the saints, indulgences and other such ungodly foolish things were with us. But the afflicted hearts cannot be uplifted in any other way than by the word of grace. All other consolation not only does not help, but (as the afflicted people complain here) only wounds more and increases anger.

V. 8. I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem.

The bride, or the people, who are in the midst of temptation, whether it be the Babylonian captivity or another, have lost their God, and are abandoned in the hands of their adversaries, so that there is no God or help to be seen anywhere. Nevertheless, it does not despair because of this, but suffers the hand of GOD to visit it, and calls out to others, exhorting them to pray. "Daughters of Jerusalem," that is, all of you who belong to this service.

V. 9. What is your friend before other friends?

[Instead of *ex dilecto* in the Vulgate, translate: *prae dilectis*. They want to know what kind of lover she has, that she prefers him to all other friends, that she, being abandoned, will turn to no other for protection and help, as men are wont to do, whom not the Spirit of God but their reason drives and teaches.

Here she now begins a long poetic (*imaginariam*) description of what kind of lover she has. Only now she describes him, after she has lost him. We are all in the habit of doing this; we are weary of our present goods and pay no attention to them. But when they are out of sight, we seek them enviously, as the poet says.

V. 10. My friend is white and red.

This is a poetic description of God, not as He is in His majesty, but as He is in His worship and words; that is, a description of God clothed and adorned with the kingdom of

and priesthood in that people 2c. The whiteness means joy, because on feast days they dressed in white. The hardship means love, as if he wanted to say: When the priesthood and the kingdom still existed intact, we had an abundance of the most beautiful gifts, through which God testified His love toward us. Therefore, everything was full of joy and gladness, now we mourn as miserable people, since the worldly regime is destroyed and those very beautiful gifts are lost 2c.

This is how it is: Those who have the word of God have God who loves them, comforts them, delights them and does them good. But the people complain that they have lost all this.

Chosen among many baptizing.

He is a chosen hero and mighty one (*gigas*) who is ready to protect his own.

V. 11. His head is the finest gold.

The religion and teachings that Moses [5 Mos. 4, 6.] The wisdom of this people is like the purest gold, the worship of other gods is like dross 2c.

His curls are frizzy (*densi* == *dense*).

At that time, when I was still holding on to God, I had an abundance of such people who organized the worship service and administered the preaching ministry, who were the closest to the head, that is, God. There was a great multitude of priests and Levites.

Black as a raven.

The priests were serious men, in whose expressions and gestures a sweet seriousness prevailed. Unless someone wanted to take the black hair for something contemptible because of the outward appearance; but this I do not believe. For black hair was very praised among them, as it is also said in Horace 1):

Spectandum nigris oculis, nigroque capillo [One must look at the black eyes and at the black hair].

V. 12. His eyes are like the eyes of doves by the rivers of water.

"The eyes" are the rulers and leaders of the people who do not worship God alone.

1) *Horritii nrs poetien*, v. 37. - In Walch's Old edition wrong: *Hornd*. I., l. Oarm. 06. W.

The dove is praised for its purity because it drinks nothing but the purest water, so that it can beware of the hawks whose image is reflected in the water. The dove is praised for its purity, because it drinks nothing but the purest water, so that it can beware of the hawks, whose image is reflected in the water. So the faithful teachers are careful to beware of false spirits, and carefully keep to the pure water, that is, to the Scriptures.

But he adds, "The eyes are washed with milk," that is, full of comfort; likewise, "And stand in fullness," that is, they show quite a cheerfulness. Hollow eyes indicate severity 2c. But the eyes of this bridegroom are full, and dwell in fullness, that is, they have a numerous people; their word is faithfully heard, the churches and schools are full of disciples.

V. 13. His cheeks found like the growing spice gardens.

"The cheeks" are the outward change of the whole people, which follows from the word; which is very lively, and spreads the sweet odor of peace, humility, faith 2c.

His lips are like roses dripping with flowing myrrh.

The lips are sweet and full of love, but they drip with myrrh, that is, the doctrine that kills; they teach, they punish; they stop, they rebuke 2c.

V. 14. His hands are like golden rings.

In all the people, he says, are people rich in good works. Of the law

Works are contracted, wrinkled and scrawny hands. Here they do good works with the highest pleasure, without any complaint.

His body (venter) is like pure ivory.

This means the common people, who are, as it were, the belly of the body of the church. Although it is weak in itself, so that it needs the service of the other members, it is white as ivory and imperishable.

V. 15. His legs are like pillars of marble.

He opposes the legs, that is, the strong in the church, to the belly.

His figure is like Lebanon.

The whole nation is like Mount Lebanon, studded with the most beautiful trees, in which are many offices, many gifts 2c.

V. 16. His throat is sweet.

His breath does not stink, but what he exhales is sweet, that is, these fruits of the church, which I have told here, please God and are pleasant to him.

And quite lovely.

Not that there are no wicked in this people, but because they have the Word, therefore he says that everything is lovely, especially since no treasure can be compared to the Word of God, in which He prescribes to us the right worship and promises forgiveness of sins, so that there is no sin left 2c.

So she praises her bridegroom and laments that she is deprived of all those gifts she had when he was present.

The sixth chapter.

Cap. 5, 17. Where has your friend gone?

The bride, sad because she lost her bridegroom, looked for him in other cities, but did not find him. Those, however, promise her that they will take care of her, help her with

Prayer and at the same time want to seek the Bridegroom with her.

Cap. 6, 1. My friend has gone down to his garden.

Here the consolation returns. For she sees that she is not completely lost from her bridegroom.

but that he went into the garden to tend the garden and gather roses, that is, to increase his gifts to the people. For when God leaves us, He does not do so in anger or out of hatred toward us, but He cleanses the vine so that it may bear fruit all the better, John 15:2. For the bride is speaking here of the fruit of temptation, that we increase in faith and good works through many tribulations.

V. 2. My friend is mine, and I am his.

That is, he is my beloved and I am his beloved. This joyfulness and confidence follows the challenge. "The roses" are the saints in this people.

V. 3. You are beautiful, my friend.

Here the bridegroom shows himself to the bride and makes it known that he delights in her faith, that she has not been broken by the challenge, so that she would have blasphemed or turned away from God. But this is a great consolation to the conscience, that it certainly believes that patience pleases God and that the sacrifice of a broken but not despairing heart pleases Him, so that even though the flesh, which is angry, grumbles a little, the spirit sighs to God and would rather remain in temptation and perish than to depart from God to godlessness. Thus experience brings hope [Rom. 5, 4].

Like Thirza, lovely like Jerusalem.

Thirzah [1 Kings 15:33, 16:8, 15:23] was the seat of the kings of Israel, as if to say: My bride, you are beautiful like Thirzah, and a well-fortified city, and like Jerusalem ordered and provided with the best laws. But it is nothing else than the description of the joyful certainty that the church or the people recognize that all his works are highly pleasing to God.

Terrible as army spikes.

The church or the people of God is not only well-ordered with worship and secular laws, but also terribly devoted to teu

fel and their adversaries. For Satan is afraid of us, when he sees that the heart is strengthened by this confidence, that we believe we please God. The adversaries are also afraid of us, for this reason they kill the godly, because they are afraid, like Pharaoh, who says 2 Mos. 1, 10: "We will dampen them with cunning, so that there will not be so many of them" 2c.

V. 4. Turn your eyes from me.

Here there is a twofold conception. The first one is that it is a warning: "Turn your eyes from me", that is, do not speculate about the majesty, otherwise you will be crushed by it. I do not approve of this one, because we see that the bridegroom has to deal with it, that he comforts. The other opinion is that it is a praise and an expression of love: "Turn your eyes away from me", they are so lovely and charming, they irritate me so that I cannot look at them any longer. He says this, not to avert his eyes, but in the manner of a lover; in telling her to avert her eyes, it is his deepest wish that she may not avert them.

It is therefore a prize of the orders in the spiritual realm. For the eyes are the teachers, as Elijah, Elisha 2c. have been. These please me so much, he says, that they provoke me to hope. These are excellent consolations by which God testifies that He approves of the worldly government and worship of this people, so that the hearts may attain the joyful certainty that they please God 2c.

Your hair is like a herd of goats.

This all agrees with the previous description [Cap. 4, 1]. But it is "the hair," as I said, the priests and Levites who are at the head of the people, governing the people with the word of GOD. "Gilead" means a heap of testimonies; that is the holy Scriptures, which in truth contain a heap of testimonies.

V. 5. Your teeth are like a flock of sheep coming out of the flood, all bearing twins.

This also belongs to the office of teaching, that one bites and scolds, not out of private hatred, but out of love and godly zeal. Therefore they are the teeth of the sheep. But what he adds of the bearing of the twins signifies the fruit of preaching. About the "cheeks" [v. 6.] is said above [Cap. 4, 3.]

V. 7. Sixty are the queens, and fourscore the concubines; and of the virgins there is no number.

So far, he has praised the various offices and estates of this people. But the praise is more to be referred to the word itself, by which the people is governed, than to the persons who govern. Now he gives thanks for the secular government given by God, that it has spread over so many cities and villages. For here one must keep the point of view (scopum) that goes through the whole book, namely that he speaks of the worldly regiment.

Therefore I take the sixty queens and the eighty concubines for the richer and the lesser cities, which were in the whole kingdom of Solomon, in Syria, Idumea, Palestine 2c., and used the same laws. The virgins are the great multitude of the other cities, all of which were governed by divine laws.

The passage in the books of Kings [1 Kings 11:3] about the number of Solomon's wives has made this passage obscure to many. But those are mistaken who think that Solomon was so lascivious that he took so many wives. This was a burden imposed on him by the law, which commanded that when a husband died, the next blood friend should take his place. Therefore, the abandoned widows saw that it would be best for them if they could be among the royal wives or concubines. This was the reason that Solomon became the husband of so many wives.

V. 8. But One is my dove, my pious 2c.

I have said that he gives thanks for the fruit that follows from the word. For this administration of the regiment is not in vain. There are

sixty queens 2c., who all make use of them. And although none of these cities is so pure that there are not many shameful and worthless people in it, yet in every single one there are some godly people, who have dove simplicity, who honor and respect this regiment from the heart, who admire and praise it as the highest gift of God, since it has the word and the church of God is in this regiment. This is my Some, my One Dove, which is gathered from the whole kingdom 2c.

When they saw the daughters, they blessed them.

All, even the wicked, must praise the godly and good citizens who are everywhere in the cities.

V. 9. Who is she who bursts forth like the dawn, beautiful as the moon, chosen as the sun?

The kingdom of Solomon, so ordered and adorned with laws, is praised everywhere; it emerges and illuminates the whole world with its rumor and glory. The other kingdoms are dark darkness compared to this one, because they are possessed by the devil. God has not sent His word to them and has not enlightened them with the rays of His knowledge. Therefore, this regiment of Solomon's, for the sake of the Word, is like the dawn, the sun and the moon in the sunrise.

But it is excellent consolation when a people with worldly rule can convince itself that it is like this before God, as he describes it here. For we often see the opposite in front of the wayer, as the history of the Israelite people also teaches us.

V. 10. I went down to the nut garden to look at the shrubs by the brook 2c. I did not know them 2c. 1)

After the consolation is finished, another challenge follows. So far he has praised his kingdom and given thanks for it. For he sees the

1) The words non uovi lm the Vulgate: nesoivi) are drawn to the eleventh verse in the Vulgate.

Dove, that is, some good in every single city, whose godliness and life he approves.

Now he turns to the other side and sees that the crowd of the wicked is so great that there seem to be no godly or good people before it. For this is how it tends to happen: The vices move the hearts exceedingly violently. Therefore, a special strength is needed here, which the Spirit of God gives, so that one does not allow oneself to be struck down by the sight of those evils.

He says, "I have gone into my garden." I have directed the office of bishop and visitator, that I might see the fruits of my regiment, and behold, the multitude of the ungodly is so great that I must say: I did not know (*nescivi*) or I did not know (*non novi*), namely my dove. For if we consider the number, the multitude of the ungodly is so great that there seem to be godly people nowhere. The same happens to us; when we visit the churches, we find so many infirmities everywhere that one might justifiably despair of the fruit of the Word; and yet the dove remains, even though it is not seen, covered by the multitude of the wicked.

V. 11. My soul did not know. 1)

This passage is very obscure. Jerome has translated it in such a way that it is very much in accordance with the opinion I have expressed: he has come to look for the fruits and to seek them, but he does not know about them, that is, he does not find anything. Because the number of the ungodly is always the greatest, then, when someone is due, the good ones are lost, as it were, and are nowhere to be seen. But it seems to me to be more appropriate if we connect the sentences in this way: I did not know it that my soul had set me to be the chariot of a noble people. 2) For I take Aminadab as a generic (appellative) name. But it is a common image that "soul" for

"Will" is set. My soul has set me to be the people's chariot, that is, I have desired to be the people's chariot. But I do not know this either. I am indeed set to preside over others and to govern others, but they do not wish to be governed, they do not wish to obey, but to govern and be princes 2c. For this is what the unruly people are wont to do.

V. 12. Return again, return again, O Sulamith.

Here the bridegroom calls the bride away from looking at evil, so that she may let it go, and rather be comforted by looking at the good that she has. It is no small art, however, that one can overcome the present temptation and bring the heart away from sadness by considering the gifts we have, which, if one judges rightly, always outnumber and far surpass the adversity by which we are oppressed. Therefore, he says: "Return, and we will look at you; turn your eyes away from the present adversity; look at yourself, and you will see how many benefits and gifts God has bestowed upon you.

But he calls her Sulamith, or a perfect one, or a peaceable one, so that by the glorious praise he may draw her away from the sad thoughts which she has taken by looking at evil. You are peaceable, that is, everything is well, you have an abundance of good of all kinds, or you are perfect, you lack nothing. For you have a regiment appointed by God, you have authorities who rule, you have subjects who obey. Now if there are also evil ones among these, do not let them move you, but rather consider your so great gifts 2c.

We should also exercise this equity in our private life, that we patiently bear some minor infirmities, be it in friends or in our spouse, since these are compensated by so many other good things, if one only wanted to mean it right.

What do you see in Sulamith?

Rather, look at her rightly and as she deserves. Recognize in her God and the

1) Vulgate: *rua eonturdavit me.*

2) In Latin: *Resoivi, ^nod xosuit nae nninaa IQ6N, ut 6886IU HUmrIM xopuli muuicici.* In the Vulgate: *^uillua inea eoutur^snvit nie xroter yuadriM8 ^ruiundad.*

Word of God, and that the commonwealth is not ordered by human but by divine counsel. What, therefore, can be criticized about it? God has not only given the household, the secular government, the church of this people, but He also approves of it; and not only that, but He has also promised that He will be with it 2c.

The round dance to Mahanaim. 2)

It is exceedingly well armed, so that there is no danger because of the multitude of the wicked that it should be overthrown by them. God is with His people and governs them 2c.

1) In Latin and Vulgate: *Ami edoros castroruva* - Nothing but hosts of encampments.

The seventh chapter.

V. 1. How beautiful is your walk in your shoes, you prince's daughter.

Here he describes in a poem the secular regiment, which is so orderly and adorned, and presents it as if it were walking along, in order to indicate that it not only has excellent gifts, but also uses them daily, because the priests teach the word of God correctly, and the authorities speak justice in the right way 2c. This he indicates by saying of the same that it has shoes on. For I do not believe that he intends the secret interpretation that it is fixed and bound by laws 2c.

Your loins are like two clasps.

It is said that among the Jews it was forbidden for young people to read this book, which others take to mean that this was done so that the young people would not be inflamed to unchastity by reading it, but I believe that it was rather forbidden because of the difficulty. For since it deals entirely with the worldly regime, it seems to be useless for young people who have no experience in human affairs. For even young people can speak and hear of women without evil desire, if they regard them as creatures of God. And the Holy Spirit has a chaste mouth and a pure heart.

He therefore speaks here of the members that serve for procreation, as of His creature whose flesh and evil desire abuse,

which is their fault, not of the Holy Spirit. I say this so that no one will be offended by this text, which seems to speak of love affairs. But one must know that the Holy Spirit in figurative speeches looks more at the application than at the image chosen for the matter (*formam rei*). Therefore, he mentions here the procreative limbs, as the belly, the navel, the loins, 2c., to describe the fertility of this people. Wide hips are praised in women, because they are best suited to carry the fruit of the womb. Therefore Solomon speaks of the spiritual procreation in this people, that the young people are instructed for the service in the church and in the worldly regiment. Such loins are the schools in our country, and that is why we say that Germany is unfortunate because it lacks this suitable and graceful standing of the loins, and the schools are in such desolate condition.

V. 2. Your navel is like a round cup that never lacks drink.

The faculty of conceiving and begetting is in the navel, which is proved from Job, Cap. 40, II, proves, "His faculty is in the navel of his belly." But he means the parents and the teachers of youth. These are, as it were, a cup that never lacks wine, that is, their instruction is not without benefit. Thus the bridegroom praises the bride for the gifts she has, so that she may take comfort in what is present and despise the evils that offend her.

Your belly is like a heap of wheat.

. Your instruction and teaching is as fruitful as a heap of wheat. Roundness is praised in the belly, as the navel is praised when it is a little indented and a little lower in the belly. "Roses" he calls the Scriptures and the laws.

V. 3. Your two breasts 2c.

The breasts she has to feed those born of her.

V. 4. Your neck is like an ivory tower.

He calls it a "tower" because the neck is upright; "ivory" because it is white and durable. But "the neck" are the teachers and authorities who are incorruptible and firm, who do not let their courage sink, who do not let themselves be overcome by hatred, love, money and goods 2c., but carry out their office as it is due.

Your eyes are like the pools of Heshbon, at the Torah of Bathrabbim.

We read nothing of these pools in Scripture. But "the eyes" are the teachers, which overflow like pools of water, that they may comfort those who are weak in faith and life. The eyes are clear, transparent, like a pond.

Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon that stands against Damascus.

A straight nose is also praised, but the Holy Spirit is more concerned with its use. He therefore indicates diligent teachers and authorities who do not snore, but watch everywhere. I believe that he points to a waiting place that was located around midnight.

V. 5. Your head is upon you, like Carmel.

"The head" are the highest among the people, namely Solomon with his princes and the high priest. These are, as it were, an exceedingly fruitful mountain, not in and of themselves, but through the glorious promises which both have.

The hair on your head is like the purple of the king [bound in folds (vincta canalibus)].

A wonderful image that he calls the hair canals, and yet, if you look at the figure, it is not far out of the way. For when the hair of women hangs down over the shoulders, it is separate, and somewhat bent or curved, so that it resembles water flowing out of a gutter. These water channels or hairs are the orders of both the Levites and the secular authorities, which flow down from the high priest and the king like hair from the crown of the head over the back to the lower parts of the body. But that he adds: "like the purple", does not refer to the color, but to the substance. For soft hair is praised, which we compare with silk.

V. 6. How beautiful and how lovely you are.

Here he praises the secular regiment adorned with so many gifts.

"Beautiful" he calls it, because all offices are so beautifully distributed.

"Lovely" because this order adorns it and delights all who see and hear it.

V. 7. Your length is like a palm tree 2c.

The palm tree does not bow under a load. So are you; the heathen will not be able to press you down. For the priests teach the word, and turn not to the hatred of the world; thy judges stand by the right, and judge aright, and care not for the envy of the world 2c. Thus it is said in 2 Sam. 14, 17: "My lord the king is like an angel of God" 2c.

V. 8. I spoke: I must climb the palm tree.

You are so pleasing to me in such order and adornment that I must embrace you. These are glorious consolations by which God indicates that everything he has said so far is pleasing to him and pleases him. For he answers with his spirit to the spirit of Solomon that he is right to praise his regiment with such exaltations and to give thanks for it, and he says after the rage

of a lover: I will climb this palm tree, that is, I will embrace you and your kingdom with love. This is how it will happen.

That your breasts may be like grapes on the vine.

Henceforth there will be no more need of milk, but I will strengthen your citizens so that they can drink wine. I will make them hard, so that they shall not only bear the evils, but also overcome them 2c. But he puts the nose together with the breasts. For the breasts teach, but the nose guards and watches over and protects the teaching.

V. 9. and your throat like good wine.

Your praise and your thanksgiving, which you bring for your people, are exceedingly pleasant to me. For "the throat" means, according to the secret interpretation, to sing, to praise, to thank. These things are to me like wine, "which goes down smoothly to my friend" 1) (for so it must be translated), that is, Therefore thy praise pleaseth me, because it is directed to me; thou praisest not thy powers, thy righteousness, but me thou praisest 2c.

Et dentibus illius ad ruminandum [in the Vulgate] we translate thus:

Who moves the lips of the old (quod commovet labia senum).

For the verb he uses here means to make famous and to spread a speech, so that the opinion is: This praise and this price, with which you praise my good deeds, are kept by the old men who have a great knowledge of the histories, and propagate them to others.

V. 11. Come, my friend, let us go out into the field 2c.

Here the bride asks for a new gift for which she will give thanks afterwards. The kingdom

Israel was very great under Solomon, for he ruled over the Edomites, the Philistines (Palaestinis), Syrians and Moabites (2 Sam., Cap. 8.).

Therefore, the Bride prays, because she has many other nations abroad (for this she calls "the field"), that the Bridegroom may give His grace to govern them also well, and that the Word may be spread among the neighboring Gentiles.

V. 12. That we rise early to the vineyards 2c.

We want to see if there are also some good men in them who are useful to the community.

There I want to give you my breasts.

We also want to teach at these places, we also want to practice our worship and our law at them.

V. 13. The lilies (mandragorae) give the smell.

Mandragora is not what we nowadays call mandragore (alrauns), but means a lovely and noble fruit, as is clear from the first book of Moses (Cap. 30, 14] and from this passage.

But the opinion is: I find the fruit of the Word also among the neighboring heathen who enjoy our religion and worldly regime. The word is not taught without fruit, but it produces exceedingly good people even among the pagans.

All kinds of noble fruits (poma), both local and distant.

Poma generally means all the noble tree fruits. It indicates that it has many good citizens, which it hides from the bridegroom, that is, the glory of the kingdom of God's people is not seen other than in the word. From whatever other side one may look at it, it is impure. Therefore, the world not only despises the good, but also persecutes and hates them; for it is not worthy that it should see a godly man or a good work. That is why the bride says, "I have kept them for you."

1) arndulat ää äileetum meuva reete, instead of: äiAurmi dilevto raoe ää potandum in the Vulgate. - It seems to us that instead of quoä in the editions it should be read, referring to vlennm; according to this we have translated.

The eighth chapter.

We have said at the beginning [in the preface] that this book of Solomon is, as it were, a song, in which he sings of the benefits of God, which are shown to his people through the word, and gives thanks for the same. But one can see that he is making the end of the song here, and asks for the future expansion of the kingdom. For he looks to the time of Christ, when the word and the service of God should be spread over the whole earth. So also in the Psalm is prayed [Ps. 68, 29. Vulg.], "Strengthen, O GOD, that which thou hast wrought among us."

V. 1. O that I might find thee, my brother, sucking my mother's breasts, outside, and kiss thee 2c.

The meaning is: O our God, increase this kingdom infinitely. It is in the field outside, that is, with the neighboring peoples, and still wishes to go out still further. But it presents its bridegroom as a little child sucking its mother's breasts. For GOD was in this people, looking at the other kingdoms in which He was to be extended, like a little child. Therefore she says: You are as it were a child sucking its mother's milk, oh that I could find you outside, planted among all nations by the word of the Gospel! But she adds, "And would have to kiss you." For "to kiss" is to give the word, to have the gospel. When this shall be done, she says, men will no more mock me. We are now a despised people, but then it will happen that in all kingdoms throughout the world there will be some who will revere and praise me, who will accept the service of GOD and believe the word of GOD 2c.

V. 2. I wanted to lead you and bring you to my mother's house.

Then I will lead you into the synagogue, as it is written of John [Luc. 1:17.], "He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children of

convert." For the Jews who believed in Christ were not led to us Gentiles, but to their fathers, that is. To the faith of the fathers. After that we Gentiles were taken into this family, so that we are now one people.

Since you were supposed to teach me.

Then the perfect Magisterium will be established, since it will be so obviously supported by the Holy Spirit.

Then I will water you with made wine and with the must of my pomegranates.

Then the teaching will be richer and stronger than it ever was under the law. I will give you wine, which you will drink, that is, which you will approve, and the must of pomegranates. This he adds, perhaps, to indicate the nature of the new teaching from various testimonies of the prophets.

V. 3. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand is hearting me.

So far we have heard the song of Solomon, in which he sang of present and past benefits, and asked that in the future the kingdom and the doctrine be spread over the whole world. What is in this chapter, I have said that it is, as it were, the conclusion, in which he refers to what he has treated throughout the whole book.

But here, too, he uses an image taken from lovers, namely, the embrace of the spouses, by which he indicates that this kingdom is under the protection of God and is governed and shaped by God. Since it is in this way that we should not doubt the favor of God toward us, he says:

V. 4. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that you do not stir up nor stir up my love.

That is, you cities that are under this worship and kingdom, wear

Take heed that ye be quiet and peaceable, that ye stir not up tumults and sedition, but rather rejoice in this grace and peace, and obey the laws, obey the authorities. In religion also, beware lest any disturbance be stirred up, either by idolatry or by other blasphemous opinions. For these two things are connected with each other: Peace cannot exist without religion or righteousness, according to the words of the Psalm [Ps. 85, 11.], "That righteousness and peace may kiss each other." Above [Cap. 3, 5.] he added an adjuration (obtestationem): "I adjure you by the deer," that at least out of reverence for the holy fathers and prophets, whom they had for ancestors, they should be quiet and still. That he adds:

Until she likes it herself,

I think he is talking about an occasion that requires it. You citizens, do not wake her up. If she is awakened by the neighboring enemies, then you also do your duty, that you at the same time watch over her and help her and contribute your goods and chattels.

V. 5 Who is she that cometh up from the wilderness, and leaneth upon her friend?

Not only the neighboring peoples, but also those who are in this people are surprised that she comes up from the desert like this. But this is something that is constantly attributed to the works of God, that they come forth as from a desert and a dry land. The wicked blossom and come forth as if from an exceedingly lovely paradise, where there seems to be nothing that could have the slightest lack of form. In contrast, the church and the people of God seem to come out of the desert. For their glory is seen only in the word. If it came out of paradise, the world would admire it, but the desert does not admire it.

And yet, he says, it is based on pleasures, namely those that the Word pours out. For wherever the Word of God is, there must necessarily be the Holy Spirit, faith and other gifts of the Spirit. Therefore, he rightly says, "she leans" and is "rotten" on God, on whose word she is so hard.

stubbornly. For even if there are some sects, they are in darkness before God, and only the godly are seen; the others are considered nothing. The same is to be said of sins and other weaknesses. I used to refer this to the soul and to a contemplative (speculativam) life; but whoever wants to describe a contemplative life properly, let him describe it in such a way that it is: believing and leaning on the Word. For those who pursue their thoughts without the Word (speculantur) are brought down by Satan, as I have experienced more than once. Therefore, let us let go of these dreams.

Under the apple tree I woke you up.

That the Latin interpreter translated: *Ibi corrupta est mater tua*, is an obvious error. For he has changed a word of pain (poenae) into a word of guilt (culpa). For the verbum here actually means the labor of childbearing or the pains of childbirth, although elsewhere it stands for spoil and injure. The mother is the commonwealth, the citizens are the children. These, he says, I awakened under the apple tree, there your mother gave you birth or gave birth to you. For the kingdom of the Jews was not at all large, if one looks at the extent. Therefore it is compared to a tree that is not great, that it is the planting place for the future kingdom of the church, which is to be spread through all the lands.

V. 6. Set me as a seal upon your heart, and as a seal upon your arm.

This is an admonition from the bridegroom that the bride should stay on the word and not suffer herself to be diverted from the word either to her own thoughts or to another service. Well, he says, may I be to you like a seal or a ring by which you acknowledge me and embrace me from the heart. Look upon me, upon me fix thine eyes and thine heart. But where are you? In the word, he says, in Jerusalem and in my temple. Put this seal on your heart 2c. The fact that he does not want it to be set on the heart alone, but also on the arm, means at the same time faith and love, that we, according to the word

God and live. When this happens, then we truly walk in royal adornment, and rightly bear this seal.

For love is strong, like death, and zeal is firm, like hell.

This reason (*ratio*) does not seem appropriate, but because this passage contains a description of the spiritual life, this saying rhymes very well with it. For since it exhorts to hold fast to faith and love, it indicates that great and unbroken courage is needed because of the many temptations that confront the godly. But how can such courage be better described than when it is called strong love? For this disposition of the heart has dominion over all others, as is shown not only by the honorable and conjugal love that is mentioned, but also by the foolish raging of youth. For it is true what the poet says: Love overcomes everything.

Therefore, the Bridegroom says If you truly love me, you will keep my seal, and you will overcome all the sorrow and trouble caused to you by the world and by Satan. For love is strong, like death, which conquers all things, and a firm zeal or jealousy (*zelus*) is like hell, which cannot be moved by pleas to restore the dead. We can call jealousy (*zelum*) an "angry love" where we are angry against the person out of excessive love, not out of hatred. But for this reason he uses the similitude of death and hell, so that he shows that the godly people will feel death and hell, as Paul says, Rom. 8, 36: "We are being killed all day long."

Their embers are fiery and a flame of the Lord.

What the Latin interpreter has translated: *atque flammarum*, means in Hebrew: a flame of God. But by both he denotes the inexhaustible and infinite embers of love, which cannot be extinguished. For he makes a distinction between the fire of God and other, earthly (mate

riali) fire, because the fire of God is eternal and unquenchable, which can neither be kindled nor extinguished by human will. This fire, he says, which God has thus kindled in you, not death, not hell, not all the wrongs that the world and the devil inflict on you, can extinguish. For love gives way to no one, and love gives way to everything.

V. 7. That even much water may not quench love.

He says here of "many waters", like Christ Matth. 7, 25:, since he speaks of the house that was founded on the rock. For no power of tempests, he says, will quench this love, but even kindle more. For those who have grasped the word with earnestness are, as it were, provoked by temptations and the cross to embrace it more closely. Therefore all temptations have this end, that although they seem to tear us away from Christ, they nevertheless unite us more with Christ.

If someone wanted to give everything in his house for love, it would all amount to nothing.

This is an excellent admonition with which he reminds the people to hold fast to the word with great diligence and care. As he has reminded them so far that they must persevere in adversity and not retreat, so here he gives a command on the other side, namely, that they should not let themselves be turned elsewhere by money and goods and power. He says: "It will happen that other lovers will pursue you, that they will attack you, not only with crosses and threats, but also with promises and goods. But be mindful of what love does. For love does not look at possessions and goods, but despises everything in the highest way. Thus Augustine says: Love outweighs all things, and it cannot be bought for any price.

V. 8. Our sister is small and has no breasts.

Above I reminded that at the end of this song Solomon looks to the spiritual kingdom of Christ, which was expected to be much more extensive and greater than the physical kingdom of the Jewish people was. And there is no doubt that this is in ordinary

The kingdom of Christ has been discussed often and much, but there was a misconception. The common people thought that the kingdom of Christ would be a physical one. They did not realize that Christ would rule through the Word in such a way that the kingdoms of the world would nevertheless retain their course.

Solomon thus says: "When we look at the expansion of the kingdom that Christ will establish through the New Testament, our present people are rightly compared to a little girl who does not yet have breasts, that is, who is not yet sufficiently ripe for the preaching of the gospel that is to be spread throughout the whole world. But here is also the indication of a lament, so that this is, as it were, a common voice of all prophets and saints in the people of the law, who long from the prison of the law into the wide space of the gospel, so that God will bring the promises made by Christ to maturity 2c.

What should we do to our sister? 2c.

This is the perfect movement of a heart inflamed with desire for the future Christ, as Christ also says in the Gospel [Luc. 10:24]: "Truly I say to you, many kings and prophets wanted to see and hear what you see and hear, but neither saw nor heard it. So Solomon says here in the person of all the saints: What shall we do? as if he wanted to say: How shall this form of the ages be, and how lovely? What he adds:

Now when you are supposed to address them.

This is an exceedingly beautiful and not dark indication that the kingdom of Christ stands only in words. For he does not say: On the day when she is to be adorned, when she is to be led into the bridal chamber, but "address" her, namely through the apostles and Christ Himself, with the sweetest preaching of the Gospel, when she will be taught about the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins, as if he wanted to say: Today is not the day to address them, but to be silent. For we are still in the prison of the law, and see from afar, as it were, a glimpse of the

Word, through which the kingdom of Christ is to be extended into the whole world. Now he answers, but very darkly:

V. 9 If it is a wall, we will build a silver bulwark on it.

This seems to be quite strange that he compares his sister with a wall that he wants to decorate with silver towers and with a door that he wants to strengthen with cedar planks. But here, too, I want to give my opinion. It seems to me that he is comparing the people of God, whom he calls his sister, to a wall with towers at the time of the Gospel. For through the ministry of the Word the church is fortified as with a wall against all false teachings, even against the gates of hell. That he does not think of one, but of several towers or bulwarks, which he wants to put on this wall, is rightly referred to the variety of offices that are necessary in the church, as Paul indicates in Eph. 4:11. He therefore praises the ministry of the word in the new people and promises that he will not abandon it but build it, so that the servants who are to guard the city will be put on hold, as it were.

If it is a door, let us fortify it with cedar planks.

"Cedar" is praised, not only because of its smell, but also because of its durability (*ab aeternitate*), for it does not rot. Hence the word in Persius: 1) Cedro digna locutus [he has spoken in such a way that it is worthy of immortality]. "The door", however, he calls the teachers or catechists in the church, through which quite a few go in and out daily.

"A wall" therefore refers to the defense, but "the door" to the teaching. Paul also uses this image [1 Cor. 16:9]: "A great door has been opened to me," and this image describes the growth of the church. For since the word is preached daily, there are always new ones whose hearts are inflamed by the spirit and love of God.

1) Persius, sat. I, v. 42.

V. 10. I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers.

This is the voice of the bride who is now manable. For the Church, having been given the Holy Spirit and the Word revealed to her, is in truth a wall against the persecutions of Satan and the heretics. And she has breasts firm as towers, with which she teaches, comforts, and instructs 2c. But this teaching and these consolations are quite sure and firm; in these souls find rest, but in other things they find no rest, as experience shows.

There I have been before His eyes, as the one who finds peace.

Where these two things are, teaching rightly and defending against the wolves, peace and tranquility follow inevitably. On the other hand, where one or both of these are missing, peace is expected in vain. But he looks at the law in passing, for there the people were afflicted under hard rule; but the teaching of the gospel brings true peace, that the hearts may not doubt the mercy of God. And it is truly the highest misfortune when God is silent and does not speak. It is all the more fitting for us to be all the more grateful after such a great light has been revealed.

V. 11. Solomon has a vineyard.

The interpreter errs [by translating: *Vinea fuit pacifico in ea, quae habet populos*, for I hold that both are proper names, so that the text should be read thus: "Solomon has a vineyard in Baal Hamon," so that the one is the name of a person, the other the name of a place, although Baal Hamon is found nowhere else. However, I connect this to the preceding in this way: Solomon looks at the end of the song to the end of the people, that is, to the kingdom of Christ, in which the word of grace should be spread over the whole world. Because the remnants of the Jews were the beginning of this kingdom, 2) therefore he calls the whole church his vineyard, and says that in Baal

1) There is a dot here in the Erlangen edition. The preceding is drawn to the previous sentence.

Hamon be, that is, in a very great multitude and in a very populous place. For Baal means a lord, and Hamon a multitude.

[This he says to comfort his people and to give them hope that the promises would certainly be fulfilled, since, as small as this kingdom is, when compared with the other kingdoms of the Gentiles, it is a planting place of the future kingdom of Christ, which is a kingdom of the multitude, because it is not bound to one place nor to certain persons, but is in all places, among all people, to the end of the world. This is the view I like best, although there is nothing to prevent us from seeing it as a conclusion of the whole book, where he praises his kingdom, saying that although it is small in the sight of the world, it is nevertheless very great in the sight of the word of God. In this way, what follows can be related to the external administration, as the histories teach that Solomon ruled the kingdom with the utmost care and diligence. But we want to continue, in honor of the Gospel, with the spiritual kingdom, whose planting place was, as it were, Solomon's people.

He gave the vineyard to the keepers.

This vineyard shall not lie neglected without care, but shall have its cultivators, the apostles and the other ministers of the Word, through whom the Holy Spirit will adorn the churches with various gifts.

That each one may bring a thousand pieces of silver for his fruit.

The limited number ["thousand"] stands for an infinite one. But because the number thousand is the highest, it indicates that these keepers come with the most complete reward and the most abundant fruits. Thus Peter, Paul, John 2c. who were set as custodians so cultivated this vineyard that it yielded exceedingly much fruit. For the word of God cannot be taught without all fruit.

V. 12. My vineyard is before me.

This vineyard is commanded to the keepers in such a way that nevertheless the Lord Himself supervises it; as the latter said:

GOD did not create the world in such a way that He would have walked away. He supervises, yes, he is present when the preaching office is taken over, and he works. Thus, in the worldly regime, those who do not look after the business themselves do not direct their ministry well.

A thousand are due to you, Solomon, but two hundred are due to the guardians, along with its fruits.

I keep [instead of pacifici in the Vulgate], the proper name [Solomon]: A thousand are due to you, O Solomon. If this is understood of the temporal government, the meaning is easy, for the prince is the lord of all. But those who render service to the prince receive each one his reward according to merit. But if we look to the kingdom of Christ and to the right Solomon, it is not obscure what John said with this [John 1:16.], "Of his fulness have we all taken." For though the keepers have two hundred, that is, though the saints have their gifts, yet Christ is the source of all goods.

V. 13. You who dwell in the giirs.

"Gardens" in the plural he calls either in the secular regiment the various principalities of Solomon, or spiritually the

Congregations. But it is an exhortation that the churches should be governed with the utmost faithfulness, for there are people who oversee and observe everything.

Let me hear your voice.

After reminding her that there are people watching the bride, he also reminds her not to be silent but to speak. For this is left, that the word of God may be constantly practiced, lest we be overcome either by weariness, or contempt, or hatred of the word, as the Jews were disgusted with the manna, and looked back upon the fleshpots of Egypt.

V. 14. Fleuch, my friend.

Here also the bride says valet to the bridegroom, and asks that he put an end to this captivity of the law and spread the free teaching of the gospel into the world, as it were into various mountains, and be like a deer that does not stop in one place. - This is how I understand this book of Solomon's worldly rule. Now, if I am wrong, a first work deserves indulgence; for the thoughts of others have much more inconsistency.

IX. D. Martin Luther's translation of the prayer of Solomon, 1 Kings 3:5-14.)

Anno 1521.

As King Solomon prays a princely prayer to GOD, to all princes and lords for a good example.

V. 5. In the city of Gideon, God appeared to Solomon in a dream by night and said to him, "Ask of me what shall I give you?"

V. 6 Solomon said, "My God, you have shown great favor to my father David, your servant, when he walked before you in truth and righteousness, and his heart was right with you; and you have kept this great favor for him, that you have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is now in the day.

V. 7. Now, dear God, my Lord, you have made me, your servant, a king in place of David my father; so I am a little youth who does not know when to go out or come in.

V. 8 So I, your servant, am in the midst of your chosen people, who are many, and cannot be numbered nor named before a great multitude.

V. 9 So give me, your servant, a listening heart, that I may judge your people,

and understand what is good and what is evil; for who can judge such a people as these, great and valiant?

V. 10. Such words pleased God that Solomon asked such things.

V. 11. And God said unto him, Because thou askest this, and askest not for long life, and askest not for riches, and askest not for the death of thine enemies, but askest for understanding, that thou mayest hear what thou shalt judge.

Behold, I do as thou hast asked. Behold, I give thee a wise and understanding heart; that before thee there was none like thee, neither shall there be any like thee after thee.

V. 13. Even those things which thou hast not asked, I give thee also, such riches and glories, that the like of thee among kings hath not been since time immemorial.

V. 14 And if thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my statutes and my commandments, as David thy father walked, so will I prolong thy life.

2) This piece actually belongs as an appendix to the interpretation of the Magnificat, from which Melcher has separated the Leipzig edition and Walch has separated it, likewise the Erlangen edition. In the collective editions it is found: in the Wittenberg (1553), vol. VI, p. 33; in the Jena (1564), vol. I, p. 500d; in the Altenburg, vol. I, p. 475; in the Leipzig, vol. VII, p. 38 and in the Erlangen, vol. 52, p. 432. That we have not brought this prayer in its proper place, vol. VII, 1445, is due to the fact that we, prompted by the Erlangen edition (since the original edition was not available to us), were of the opinion that it was missing from the original. Compare our note vol. VII, 1445.

End of the fifth part.